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MDCCCLII.

PREFACE.

EVER since I began to write for the young, the impression has been fastening itself upon my mind, that every individual is, or should be, a missionary ; and that this is as true of woman as of man. Indeed, I have come to the conclusion that she is the more efficient missionary of the two. I have therefore wished to prepare for her a work in this spirit,—one which should serve as a kind of second volume to the “Young Woman’s Guide,” but should be imbued at the same time with more of the spirit of piety.

I have addressed the *young* woman, because, as Jacob Abbott has well said, no one is apt to think herself old ; so that all books, it would seem, in order to be read, should be written for the young. Besides, I have always hope of the reformation, or at least of the improvement of the young ; while of the old little is to be expected. And

I have written to a sister, that by having before the mind's eye a reality, I might be at once more earnest, more familiar, and practical. It has been my purpose, in one word, to show woman, in a plain and direct manner, by what means, methods, and instrumentalities, permission may be best accomplished.

May the excellencies of the book, if it have any, under the Divine guidance, fulfil my earnest intentions ; and its failings, of which I am conscious it may have many, be covered with the mantle of charity.

THE AUTHOR.

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LETTERS TO A SISTER.

LETTER I.

GENERAL VIEWS AND REMARKS.

THERE is much of truth in the very common remark, that it is the fashion of the age to extalt young men. I have admitted this in the "Young Woman's Guide," and have apologized for it. Young women, I said, have influence and responsibility as well as young men; nay, even more and greater than they. And in the numerous counsels, cautions, and instructions of that volume, I have, as I trust, done something on their behalf —something for their intellectual and moral elevation.

But the importance of the young woman's influence rises in my estimation, every day and hour I live. I thought much of her, as an agent under God and *with* God, ten years ago;

now she seems to be like conscience, one of God's own vicegerents.

You have heard me speak often of the late Rev. Timothy Flint, of the Western Review, and his notions regarding female influence. I am not in the habit of making long quotations from other writers, especially in the beginning of a book; but I beg leave for this once, to commend to your notice a few paragraphs from one of his essays, by way of introduction to what follows.

“The vain, ambitious, and noisy,” says he, “who make speeches, and raise the dust, and figure in the papers, may fancy that knowledge will die with them, and the wheels of Nature intermit their revolutions when they retire from them. They may take to themselves the unction and importance of the fly, that fancied it turned the wheel upon which it only whirled round. But the fair that keep cool, and in the shade, with unruffled brows, kind hearts, and disciplined minds; that are neither elevated much nor much depressed—that smile and appear to *care for none of these things*—these, after all, are the real efficientst that settle the great points of human existence. Men cannot stir a step in life to purpose, without them.—From the cellar to the garret, from the nursery

to the market-place, from the cabin to the president's chair, from the cradle to the coffin, these smilers, that when they are wise appear to care so little about the moot and agitating points of the lords of creation, in reality decide and settle them.

"There are a number of distinct epochs of the exertion of this influence. They rule us at the period of blond tresses, and the first development of the rose. They fetter us alike before and after marriage ; that is, if they are wise, and do not clank the chains ostentatiously, but conceal the iron. They rule us in maturity,—they rule us in age. No other hand knows the tender, adroit, and proper mode of binding our brow in pain and sickness. They stand by us in the last agonies, with untiring and undismayed thankfulness. They prepare our remains for the last sleep. They shed all the tears of memory, except those of the mocking eulogy, and the venal and moaning verses, that water our turf. Some of them remember more than a year, that their lovers, brothers, husbands, fathers, existed. Who can say *that* of men ?

"They are purer, less selfish, less destitute of true moral courage, more susceptible of kind and generous impressions, and far more so of

religious feeling, than men. So Park found them,—so all qualified observers have found them. So the annals of the church have found them. So, in our humble walks have we found them. Surely, then, every thing which concerns the education of this better half of the species must be of intrinsic importance. If this world is ever to become a better and happier world, woman, well educated, disciplined, and principled, sensible of her influence, and wise and benevolent to exert it aright, must be the original mover in the great work."

Excuse these quotations—I know you will, however; for do they not deserve to be written in letters of gold? Do they not deserve to be treasured up in the memory as sayings of priceless value? What though woman is rather more selfish in her own way than Mr. Flint's remarks imply, and what though they may be occasionally more sound than sense in what he says, yet with every reasonable abatement, is there not enough left to immortalize their author?

But if woman is deserving of all these encomiums, in her present half-developed—I was going to say half-savage—state; what will she *not* be, when in some blessed periods of the world's history she shall be “well educated, disciplined, and principled?” Alas for the immense loss the

community has sustained for the want of the full exercise of those powers, which a better and more truly Christian education might have early developed !

The worst difficulty, however, is to make the community feel that they have *sustained* a loss. Many who admit it in word, do not really believe and feel it, after all. What we have never enjoyed ourselves, though fairly within our reach, we hardly attach any value to. It is only when “the well” from which we have been accustomed to slake our thirst “becomes dry, that we know the worth of water.”

Suppose we had, for once, on the stage of human action, a generation of females who came fully up to the high standard such a man as Mr. Flint would place before them—a generation in one word, who understood the true nature of their mission, and were endeavoring in the strength of God, to fulfil it. Suppose that with the physical power and energy of such a woman as Semiramis—the intellectual activity and power of a Somerville—the philanthropy of a Dix or a Fry—and the piety of a Guyon or a More, there were coupled the benevolence, the self-denial and the self-sacrifice of Jesus—in other words the pure spirit of the Gospel. What might not be expected from

her, even in a single generation ? But suppose still farther—for this is the point at which I am now aiming—that after having been blest by a generation of such women, who should co-operate with the Redeemer to restore a world which woman was so instrumental in ruining, we were to be suddenly deprived of them ; should we not then know something of their value ?

I doubt, however, whether one person in ten can be brought to believe woman is susceptible of being elevated as high as the spirit of my remarks may seem to indicate ; even though our efforts for the purpose were extended to a thousand years. Most may admit, that woman *ought* to be and do all I have said ; but it is one thing to know what we ought to be and do, as I shall be told, and quite another thing to do it.

Now I understand all this. Indeed, I admit it all. But I do *not* admit, for “the faith once delivered to the saints” *does not permit* me to do so, that woman cannot be all that she *ought* to be. If she *ought* to sustain the character which I have here faintly portrayed, then it seems to me we have no right to say that she cannot do it, nor to act as if we *believed* she could not. If there is but a bare

possibility of her coming up to our *beau-ideal*, surely it ought to fill us with faith and hope and good works. We ought to do all in our power to emancipate and elevate her.

"All these encomiums upon woman look well on paper ; and I rejoice to believe you are quite sincere ; I seem to hear you say. "But," you immediately add, "it will be *a long time* before woman will come up to what you call the Christian standard, and co-operate with the Divine Mind in all his plans."

But now my dear sister, is this the only objection you have to bring against it—that it must be the work of time ! Has this ~~is~~ reality, any thing to do with the subject ? A long time ! How long, pray ? Do you say some hundreds of years ? And what then ? Suppose it were thousands, or tens of thousands ; does that lessen our obligation ?

Some, I know, are not quite of Milton's opinion, that "they best serve God"—on occasions, at least,—"who wait." They must have immediate and even large results, or their arms are palsied, and they are without hope. But others have more faith, and will labour, even when the day of reward is far in the distance. A few indeed will labour as hard for a distant reward as for one which is nearer.

I fell no disposition, however, to make so large a demand of my fellow-creatures as the latter remark might seem to imply. I were expecting too much, as it seems to me, of human nature. Nevertheless I have a right to demand that young women should labour, and labour *hard* even, for the emancipation and elevation of their sex. And the more distant this period, and the less they expect to be able to accomplish, the greater the obligation to do what little they can.

Every human being has his mission;—I mean under the Gospel. Young women have theirs. This mission is one of unspeakable importance to the race. Flint has not over-estimated it. He cannot. Nor has Solomon, in his writings. Nor could he. It is beyond human estimate or ken.

For, hear me a moment on the subject. If you will do so, I am sure you will come to the same conclusion that I have. The thought has been ventured already, in some of my works—I have forgotten which—that the first female of our race has already been influential in forming the character of thousands of millions of human beings. All who have descended from her have been more or less like her, and have partaken of her fallibility and frailty. But all who

have descended from, or *will* descend from her, are her daughters. You, my sister, and every female besides you, are but other Eves. In the providence of God, you are destined—in all probability it is so—to have as wide an influence as Eve already has had. I do not say that your influence in the progress of the thousands of years that are to come, will be as wide at any given time, as hers will *then* be; far otherwise. Hers will be extending all the while as well as yours. But I do say that the period will probably arrive, in time or *eternity*—and it makes little difference which, so far as my present argument is concerned—when you and every young woman now on the stage of action, will have had as wide an influence for good or for evil, as Eve has already had.

I have said *for good* or *for evil*—but whether for good or for evil depends on your own choice. So God wills it, so you must understand it. God wills that *you* should will, rather than that you should *decree*. Young, the poet, says, and with a poet's license to be sure, but with a philosopher's correctness,—

“Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees.”

So does almighty woman. Woman, as well as

“Man, is the maker of immortal fates;”

and woman as well as man falls by her own choice, if finally she falls. But neither man nor woman falls alone, as you have seen already, and will see more distinctly by-and-bye.

Now this is a serious matter, and I once more bespeak for it your most earnest and serious consideration. Are you prepared to slide along life's current, like many of your sex, careless whether your influence be like that of Eve, or whether you become, under the Gospel plan, the progenitor of a new world.

Perhaps my meaning, when I spoke of your having the Spirit of Jesus Christ, co-operating with him, &c., was but faintly apprehended—indeed I do not see how it could have been otherwise, so low are all human standards.—The idea of being like Christ, when we come to make any specifications, and even when we do not, is mysticism to many, and rouses the scepticism, more or less, of all. And a few there are who regard it as a species of irreverence, if not something worse.

You, however, know better than all this.—You know that it requires a great deal of truth and holiness and purity to apprehend truth and holiness and purity. Our Saviour is by most, but little understood. The highest and holiest and purest, whether of your sex or ours, are

elevated only just enough to get a glimpse of him. The more we are elevated—that is, the more like him we become,—the more we shall see *of* him and *in* him.

Why, I have not a doubt that the time will come—it may be near at hand, God grant it may—when what now seems to be the perfection of Jesus Christ will be attained, aye, and much more. I speak here, of course, with sole reference to what is imitable in his character, or merely human. His character as an atoning sacrifice I leave out of the question.—But in zeal and labour, and self-denial and purity, and in the ordinary duties of self-sacrifice, we see now not a tithe of what we shall see in him hereafter, if we are but wise. We see nothing but what we may hereafter be able to imitate—nothing in fact but what we ought to be able to imitate at present.

And it is our own fault, as I have already suggested, that we are not every thing which the Saviour now appears to us to be—with the above qualifications of expressions. It is woman's fault—and man's—that she is not, by being like him, co-operating with him at this moment. It will be her fault if she does not become to the thousands of millions who will probably succeed her, for *good*, all that Eve

has been for *evil* to the thousands of millions who have already traversed our world, and lived, and died in it, and ascended from it.

Perhaps you will call this preaching. But I am, as you know, no theologian, nor the son of any. I am a mere layman. I do not speak to you as a theologian ; no, nor merely as a Christian. Indeed, I do not much care whether you call it Christianity. What I say is plain philosophy. Indeed, I know not that it deserves the large name of philosophy. I shall be satisfied if it deserve the name of sober sense.

Woman's mission, then, is to co-operate with the Redeemer of men, in bringing back from its revolt, the same world which was lost by another species of co-operation on the part of Eve. This I say is woman's mission ; but if so, it is the mission of the *young* woman, as well as of the old. The young woman is but the old in miniature. The young woman, moreover, will soon be the old woman—much sooner, it may be, than she is aware.

But how shall the young woman act, to fulfil this high mission ? What are the particular steps in which she is to tread ? What are the instruments by which she is to war a good warfare against depravity in its varied

forms, and by which she is to substitute holiness in its stead?

Shall she mount the rostrum like Frances Wright, alias Frances Darusmont? Shall she turn cavilling philosopher, like Mary Woolstonecraft? Shall she become a mere Hannah More, and attempt to fulfil her mission wholly at the point of her pen? Or is there a more excellent way for her?

To answer, in a plain practical manner, these plain practical questions, and to point out, to the full extent of my power, the more excellent way in which a modern young woman is to fulfil her mission—a mission next to divine—will be the object of my future letters. God give you the docility—both of us the wisdom—so indispensably necessary to our mutual benefit.

LETTER II.

* SPIRIT OF WOMAN'S MISSION.

WHEN a young woman distinctly understands what her mission is, her first duty is to enter into the spirit of it. A few directions in regard to imbibing and manifesting this spirit, will be the subject of the present letter.

And first, in regard to IMBIBING the spirit of your mission. How shall it be done? Wisdom would reply, as she has done, in the volume of Solomon: "Whoso findeth me, findeth life." In other words, seek the spirit of thy mission in seeking me. Christianity would reply in nearly the same manner. And philosophy has an answer at hand of similar import.

It were vain for me to attempt a wiser answer than these. Then be entreated to give yourself to reflection. Young women are not fond of reflection, as you well know. This, however, is the first thing. Consider thy ways,

and be wise. Consider well what has been said in the preceding letter. Consider well the united voice of Christianity, Philosophy, and sound wisdom.

Place yourself, as it were, at the feet of Jesus Christ. Take him as your example, your teacher, your monitor, your law-maker, your standard. Study the divine record concerning him. Strive to discover his "manner of spirit," and compare your own with it. You will soon learn to value his spirit; and while you value it, you unawares imbibe it.

In the next place, and if convinced that you ought to be like the Saviour, act according to your convictions. *Do* what you know is right. In other words, be conscientious. It is in vain that God gave you a conscience—nay, worse than in vain, if you do not heed its warnings.

If you find yourself prone to break your daily resolutions of amendment—if you find your own strength, owing to the force of long continued bad habit, to be little more than weakness, still be persuaded to persevere. Make your resolutions anew, and make them in the Divine strength—that is, relying on Divine aid.

Nor should you *give up*, even if you break your first resolutions, made in God. Some say it is better not to make good resolutions than to

make them and not perform them. But I have lived long enough to observe, that however true this remark may seem, those who have it most frequently in their mouths are the very persons who never resolve at all. And she will accomplish little or nothing who never resolves.

I grant, indeed, that it is bad to resolve and not keep our resolutions. We ought to keep them. Why should we not? What hinders? Still I maintain that it is best to resolve. We do not resolve with the *intention* of breaking our resolutions, nor need we.

The question was put by one of our Saviour's followers—"How often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times?" And what was the answer? "I say not unto thee, till seven times, but till seventy times seven." Or as some interpret it, as long as the offence is repeated. Shall a young woman be less charitable or forgiving towards others? Shall she forgive those who sin against her to the 490th time, and shall she not forgive herself for sinning against herself to the *fourth*?

But the manifestations or evidences that the spirit of Christ is within us remain, you still say, to be noticed. What are those evidences? How is the spirit of reform—the new spirit—the spirit of Christ, made known to the world?

How is our light so to shine that others, seeing our good works, may be led back to God ?

Perhaps I might answer in the language of an ancient maxim, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Or in language quite as ancient ; by "*the love of our brethren.*" He that hath the spirit of Christ, brings forth fruit accordingly ; and not only brings forth fruit, but *much* fruit. He loves his brother, too, even unto death. I shall say more of this hereafter.

Let me point you to one result, one manifestation of the spirit of Christ, which you may not have thought of ; but which you may easily judge whether you possess. It is the love of moral and religious improvement in yourself and in others. It is in substance, what the Scriptures refer to when they speak of our hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

I have spoken of conscientiousness, as being greatly important. Now you must not only be conscientious, but love to be so. Whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well ; carefully, conscientiously, rightly. There is no act of your lives so small but you should labour with all your might; and resolve, and if necessary, re-resolve concerning it.

One man whom I know, a minister, who was deeply versed in human nature, as well

as familiarly acquainted with his own heart, used to say, that among the most promising things in man or woman, was a strong solicitude to *do* and *be right* in every thing.

But this being and doing right, with many, amounts to little more than a desire, stronger or weaker, not to do wrong. Or if it rises a *little* higher and includes a little more—a small degree of love of doing right, for the sake of the right—it is *only* in very small measure.

And if it rises occasionally to the point I have mentioned—a moderately strong desire of doing right, a positive love of virtue or excellence—it still falls short in this particular, that it does not, in striving to be and do right, come up to the highest gospel standard—that of desiring, with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength, to be and do as right as possible.

She who is fully imbued with the true Gospel spirit, not only labours and prays to have every thing—the smallest matter even—done right, but as right as possible. And if she fails of her resolution to do every thing in this manner, she mourns over her delinquency, and is in bitterness on account of it; and resolves again. Indeed, she repeats her resolution and efforts, if need so require, to the thousandth or ten thousandth time.

And then, if at any time she succeeds, and conscience approves of her course as having been the wisest and best which was possible under the circumstances, even this does not fully satisfy a nature not wholly intended for the world. She is never ready to be *stereotyped*. She is never so perfect as to be willing to remain stationary. The higher the ascent she climbs to-day, the greater her courage that she can climb a little higher to-morrow.

No matter how trifling the action, I say again —no matter if it be but the putting on of a head-dress, the eating of a meal of victuals, or the getting of a lesson on the piano or at school. No matter if it be something which she has done a thousand times over, and which seems so trifling as hardly to possess any character at all, if such an action there could possibly be.

I knew a teacher* many years ago, whose praise was all over the land, and had been so for a long period. There were lessons to be recited to him from day to day, which he had heard perhaps a hundred times. And yet he was known to affirm, just at the close of life, that he never, if possible, heard the simplest and most familiar lesson recited, without

* The late Joseph Emerson.

first studying it as faithfully, at least once over, as any of his pupils.

Why all this carefulness to study a lesson already as familiar to him as the Alphabet or Multiplication Table? The professed reason—doubtless the *real* one—was that he wished to do his duty as a teacher better than before,

“And better thence again, and better still
In infinite progression.”

This spirit of JOSEPH EMERSON was the true spirit. It was the spirit of Christ. It is the spirit which I wish you to imbibe and to manifest. And one mode of manifesting it is that of which I am now speaking. I will say even more: they who do not manifest this spirit are not Christ's true followers. They may have a name to live, but practically, they are either dead or asleep.

There is a world whose inhabitants, from highest to lowest, endeavour to perform each passing action a little better than ever before. These morning stars, in singing together for joy, though it be a song they have sung ten thousand times, endeavour to raise their notes a little higher, and make the harmony a little sweeter at every repetition.

The portals of this world of blest harmony,

are to be entered, if entered at all, this side the grave. Heaven is not so much a place, as a state. It is a state of holiness. It is to come round again to the same point, the spirit of Christ. But neither heaven here, nor heaven there, can *be* heaven, without the constant desire and effort to do every thing better and better. Joseph Emerson was not much more truly in heaven—only more fully so—when having passed the bounds of time and space, he held a golden harp in his hand, that when he was conning over again a lesson in spelling or arithmetic.

It is vain to say, in reply to all this—and I hope you, my dear friend, will not attempt it—that there is a grade of human action so low, and so allied to mere instinct, as to have no moral character—no right or wrong about it. Paul, if not the Saviour, has taught a very different doctrine ; and you will, as I trust, hold no controversy with Paul. He says that whatever we do—even our eating and drinking—should be done to the glory of God. Can that be destitute of moral character, which is to be done to God's glory ?

I am not ignorant, that the human heart, sometimes even when partially sanctified, rises up against these views, and gravely, and sin-

cerely too, asks whether, by teaching that small actions,—the tying of a cravat or a shoe for example—have moral character to them, I shall not disgust people, and defeat the very ends at which I aim. It is sufficient for me, however, that as high an authority as Paul, has settled the question. Shall I be wiser than Paul?

No, my dear friend, you have not taken the first step towards co-operating with Christ in attempting to save the world (and thus fulfilling your mission), till you have made it your fixed determination to do every thing which you do, at all times, a little better than ever you did it before.

Examine yourself, then, not in any light I may have thrown on the subject, so much as in the light of reason, and conscience, and common sense, and the Gospel. To all these, you hold yourself, under God, amenable. Examine yourself, I say, and remember, as you perform the duty, the awful fact, that if any have not the Spirit of Christ, they are none of his.

LETTER III.

DUTIES TO YOURSELF.—YOUR HEALTH.

I HAVE now gone through with preliminaries, at which you will doubtless rejoice. I know full well how irksome this moralizing—preaching, if you will have it so—is to the young; especially to young women. Yet is it not, in its time and place, needful?

Let me now take for granted that you are fully awake to the spirit of your mission. You are ready to say: “Here I am, Lord; send me on any service of thine for which I am qualified, or can become so. Let me know, at least, the first step I ought to take, and I will gladly obey the divine indication.”

Perhaps I ought to say that one of the first, if not the *very* first duty you have to perform, is to yourself—physically, socially, intellectually, and morally. In other words, it is to make yourself a specimen and pattern, in all these particulars, as perfect as possible.

You have a body—fearfully and wonderfully made. With this body your mind is most curiously and even wonderfully connected. They have a powerful sympathy with each other. If one suffers, the other suffers more or less with it; and often with a corresponding degree. If one enjoys—is in a healthful condition—the other enjoys also.

A few have taught, as I am well aware, a very different doctrine. They have taught that ill health has a sanctifying influence. That by it mankind are prepared, in a most remarkable degree, for the enjoyment of the righteous.

The mistake they have made consists in magnifying to a general rule, what is manifestly a mere exception. The Father of the Universe, who “educes good from ill,” every where (whenever that ill cannot, without doing violence to free agency, be avoided), and who causes even the wrath of man to praise him, has contrived to make sickness, when he can, prove a blessing. And yet, in five cases for one, if not twenty-five to one, it hardens rather than softens the human heart.

Health, in man or woman, as a general rule, is highly favourable. How can it be otherwise? How can that mind and spirit which are bound to a crippled body, like the ancient Roman¹,

criminal to a putrid carcass, be otherwise than impeded in their upward flight?

And yet health, in any good degree, in either man or woman, is exceedingly rare. I grant that a considerable number are free from what is usually accounted real disease. They may not—probably *do* not—undergo pain. They may not actually suffer, at this moment, from fever, inflammation, pleurisy, rheumatism, gout, apoplexy, consumption, small-pox, or cholera. And if these last and their kindred were the only unhealthy conditions of mankind, we might, at almost any given moment, speak of disease as the exception, rather than the general rule.

The fact is, that a large proportion of our children and youth—of the whole race, I mean—come into the world with disease for an inheritance. One-fourth of each generation, in this part of the United States at the least, inherit a tendency to scrofula or consumption. And more than another fourth inherit a tendency to other diseases which could be mentioned.

Then again, a diseased condition of the system is *acquired*, as well as inherited. Thus many who are born comparatively healthy, become liable to fever, consumption, bowel

complaint, eruptive disease, sore throat, &c. For even catarrh, or *cold* as it is usually called, is a disease ; and, as a diseased habit, is often wholly acquired.

From these two sources it comes to pass that a large majority of our young women, from twelve to twenty-five years of age, are already the subjects of disease, and need remedial directions, rather than preventive. My limits do not permit of either, to any considerable extent. A few brief directions only will be given, and those will relate to prevention.

In the first place, however, allow me to impress on your mind the idea that God in his Providence has, in a general sense, placed your health in your own power. I do not mean that this remark is true without qualification or limit, but only that it is *as* true, as it is that your intellectual and moral character are put in your own power. As surely as you can be wise, or good, just so truly can you be healthy.

Do you say, almost with impatience : " But have you not, of yourself, already asserted, that a large proportion of our race inherit disease ? How then is it true, that our health depends upon our own efforts, as your remarks

seem to imply? Is there not contradiction in all this?"

The question, though hasty, is yet pertinent. But the answer is easy. We do not hesitate to speak of our moral character, as within our own power. God did not make us mere machines. So of our intellectual capability. Our knowledge is made dependent, as a general rule, on our own exertion. And yet some of us inherit bad tempers, bad passions, and feeble faculties—not to say, here and there, downright perversion and idiocy. The common doctrine, that our virtue and our knowledge are within our own power, is just as much in contradiction to the law of moral and intellectual inheritance, as the law I have announced is in regard to physical matters.

Indeed, if we look this whole subject through, we shall find that health, knowledge, and moral excellence, are all comparative. Some are healthier, others less so; some are wiser, some less wise; some more moral, and some less so. It is thus, in regard to inheritance—it is the same thing in regard to acquirement. And it is so again, in regard to virtue or moral excellence. The latter is easy to some, difficult to others.

I dwell the longer on this point, plain and

simple as it seems to many, because to others it may appear to be a strange doctrine ; and I wish to show them just how it is. It makes a very different impression to say, in a general way, that God has placed our health in our own power, from what it does when we say, that mankind ought not to be sick. People will assent to a great many doctrines and rules when we do not apply them.

I wish you to do more than merely to assent to the broad statement that our health is, as a general rule, at our own disposal. I wish you to make an application of the principle to your own circumstances, and to those of others, around you.

You inherit a scrofulous tendency. This was not indeed discoverable at first ; and probably for the first year or two years of life, you were regarded as unusually healthy ; you were fleshy, as I suppose, and had red cheeks. But subsequent experience showed that your physical endowments were not so very ample, after all. You were nervous, irritable, irregular in your appetite, subject to colds, &c. In other words, to repeat the statement, you had a scrofulous.

Now this constitution it is which has given you so much trouble, all your life time, to this

hour. You have been susceptible of disease of almost every kind, and liable to continual derangement, bodily or mental. And you still suffer, both in body and mind.

Now, this condition and lot is susceptible of much alleviation and improvement. You may not be able, it is true, to accomplish all you may desire. You may not—probably will not—be able to eradicate wholly the disease. There will be a tendency to scrofulous affections, as long as you live.

Still you may do much, I again say, to make your condition tolerable. You may even diminish the scrofulous tendency. You may, in the course of any ten years, especially the next ten, add fifteen or twenty per cent. to your general vigour. And the more you do, in this way, the more you *can* do.

You are apt to be discouraged, because I assure you that the work of improvement must be slow. I know well the tendency to discouragement, and the danger of giving all up as hopeless. The destruction of the poor is their poverty, says Solomon; and in like manner the destruction of the poor is their poverty in regard to health. It is with them as it is with the business man of small capital, his earnings must be in the same proportion, that

is, very small; whereas they who have a large capital can, with the same amount of effort, secure much larger gains.

Remember one thing, by way of encouragement, that your gain will be greater, from the same amount of effort, than that of many of your female friends and acquaintance. The reason is, they have less capital than you. I know how ready you are to think you are worse off with scrofula, than you would be with any other chronic disease. But it is not so. The dyspeptic, and even the consumptive person, are still worse off. I do not speak here with regard to the duration of life; for I do not know but the consumptive person, and still more the dyspeptic, may last as long as you.—What I say, refers chiefly to your power to invigorate your constitution, and thus to enjoy your life while you *do* live.

You will understand by this time one great principle, which I trust I have more than indicated by the foregoing remarks, viz., that the more health you have—the more, I mean of constitutional vigour—the more you can get.—The feeblest of your neighbours, the most miserable dyspeptic you know, can do a little for herself; and so may she who is far gone in the worst forms of consumption. Indeed, no

person is so feeble, even with fevers, pleurisics, or other acute diseases, as not to be able, by rigid obedience to the laws of God and man,—especially the former—to gain something temporarily, if not permanently.

You will observe, of course, that I do not say that the consumptive person, and every body else, will get well, if they obey: with this I have nothing to do—of this I *know* nothing. I know not how long people have transgressed, nor how grievously. All I affirm is, that they may improve their condition. The feeblest, I say, can do something; and what they *can* do, it is highly indispensable they should do. The strongest and most healthy can do the *most* for themselves, however.

For, need I say again, that it is with this matter of health, as with knowledge, morality, &c., that while none are sunk so low in ignorance, depravity, or disease, as not to be able to do something for themselves, none are so elevated in knowledge, goodness, and health, as not to be able to make further advances? And still more, that the less they have of any of these, the more difficult is it to make new accessions; and the more they have, the more they can increase their capital or stock?

I will not say, of course, that the comparison

I have here made of health with knowledge and virtue, will hold in every particular ; but certain am I of one thing, that it will hold as far as I have chosen, in this letter, to carry it. The more health we have, the more we can get, is a rule to which we know, as yet, of no exceptions.

One or two inferences should be made from all this. If God has put your health in your power, then is it not your duty to attend to it ? If the more health you have, the more, *as a general rule*, you can get, have you a right to excuse yourself and say, “ All those instructions about health may answer for the feeble and sickly ; but I have nothing to do with them ? ”

Have you not, on the contrary, much more to do with them than the feeble and the sickly ? Grant that they are inexcusable, if they neglect themselves : are you not more so ? Is it not a scriptural, aye, and a common sense rule—To whom much is given, of the same shall much be required ?

But if you are morally bound to attend to bodily health, whatever may be your present condition, and however great your present possessions, in this particular, are you not morally culpable for neglect ? Are you not, at least, blameworthy, if you do not act up to the dig-

nity of your present convictions of what is physically right?

Do not startle at the idea of blame for being sick. What if the thought is new? What if it seems strange? Does its novelty and singularity make it the less true or less important? If it is a just and necessary conclusion from just and necessary premises, then why startle at it? Why not receive it, and make it a law to your conscience? Why not obey it also, and enjoy the blessed consequences?

In an event, I hope you will no longer hesitate to make yourself acquainted with the laws of your physical frame. By this I do not mean, of course, that it is needful for you to study Anatomy and Physiology with the same earnestness, and to the same extent, which is necessary for thy physician and surgeon. All young women are not called to practise medicine, like Miss Blackwell. But a general knowledge of this subject is certainly useful, and if you would fulfil your mission, in the best possible manner, quite indispensable.

There is, however, a range of study, which comes short of this; and yet answers, very well, the purposes of young women. It is what the French call Hygiene—and for which we have no English name, in any one word.

It is a proper consideration of the laws of *relation*. Anatomy teaches structure, physiology, laws; but Hygiene, relations. Thus man is related to air, temperature, food, drink, and clothing; and, by means of bones and muscles, to the earth we tread on, &c.; and this relation involves certain conditions or laws of relation.

In pursuing this study, it will indeed be necessary to appeal to the laws of Anatomy and Physiology, and consequently to explain them occasionally. But it is not necessary, in the study of Hygiene, by young women, to *begin* with Anatomy and Physiology, any more than it is necessary to commit to memory a long catalogue of dry Grammar or Arithmetic rules, before we proceed to parsing or ciphering.

This study of Hygiene, I recommend to you most earnestly, not so much because it is becoming fashionable, as because it is for your life—the life of the body and the life of the soul. I cannot indeed dwell on it, in this volume; the subject must be reserved for a future series of letters, or perchance for a volume by itself. I may indeed in my next two or three letters, just allude to it.

LETTER IV.

AMUSEMENTS.

CLOSELY connected with the subject of health is that of amusements ; nor is it much less important. Few things demand more the serious attention of those who have the charge of the young of both sexes, at the present time—females no less than males—than the manner in which they are to amuse themselves. It is of course a subject of importance.

For amusement you must have, of some sort or other. Your opening nature, bodily and mental, demands it. You need it as much as the kitten or the lamb. It has been a maxim, “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” So would all study, as well as all work. So would all *any thing*. You cannot be deprived of your amusements, but at your peril. Even at your own ago, all this is literally true.

I speak with the more freedom, in regard to amusements for the young, because there is the

beginning of an awakening of the public conscience, which has so long slumbered, on this great subject. Good people, as well as others, are beginning to see that they have been guilty of a neglect, whose consequences have often pierced them through with many sorrows.

What, then, are some of the forms in which the young, especially those of more advanced years, like yourself, should amuse themselves?

Several things should be kept in view, in relation to this matter. Your amusements should be of such a nature as is compatible with health of body and mind. They should be such as afford exercise to those organs and faculties which are not otherwise called into sufficient activity. They should be such as are relished. They should have a good social and moral tendency.

It happens, by the way, that amusements which are peculiarly healthy to one person, are often less so to another. This fact may be owing to temperament, mode of employment, inherited or acquired tendencies to disease, &c. While, therefore, in all our directions we should keep in view the laws of health, we must by no means forget the varying circumstances of the individual.

Your temperament—nervous and sanguine

but not highly active—requires active exercise. You pursue household employments, in part, and these are highly favourable. Thus far considered, you would not seem to demand very active amusements. But then, again, you do not highly relish your housework, while you are excessively fond of your garden, your walks, your pony and your carriage.

On the whole, you find yourself most benefited by amusements in the open air. You would not be profited so much by the dance, even if you could relish it, and could be made to believe it had a good moral tendency.

Your fondness for your garden, is very highly favourable. Continue that fondness. Your flowers, your vines, your fruit-trees, will all of them minister to your amusement. Whether watering, budding, pruning, hoeing, or collecting the products of your labour, you will still be amused, and both mind and body be greatly improved.

But this is not enough—it does not go far enough. You need something more active, as jumping, running, and the like. I will tell you what will be about the right amusement for you, beyond the garden and field. An occasional ramble with a friend or with a small party, in pursuit of rare flowers, plants, mine

rals, insects, or birds. And should you, in your zeal, so far compromise your dignity, as to forget the staid snail-like pace to which, ever since you entered your teens, society has endeavoured to constrain you, as to walk a little more rapidly, or even run, and clap your hands, and shout *Eureka*, do not think you have committed a sin unpardonable in Heaven's court; or that even the tribunal of your company will condemn you. You have your trial before a jury of the "sovereign *people*"—though it may not always be exactly twelve in number; be, therefore, of good courage.

Walking to do good—when your feelings are so much absorbed as to make you forget to measure your pace—is one of the best amusements of body and mind you can possibly have; next, I mean, to those which have been just now mentioned. But mere walking, that is, walking for the *sake* of walking, is worth very little to you or anybody else.

Exercise on horseback comes next. As you are fond of this, and as you require the open air, it is highly proper. Those, however, who incline either to pulmonary or bilious complaints, will, as a general rule, reap more immediate, solid advantages from it than you will.

I need not add to these hints. I need not

interdict balls, assemblies, parties late at night, nor even a too frequent attendance on the lecture or the scientific experiments. Still less need is there that I should refer to the dance. Your own good sense and former habits are sure to decide right here.

Your neighbour Cynthia, with her bilious temperament and sluggish mental characteristics, requires amusements of a somewhat different character. Not indeed less active, but much more so. She needs the free air also as much as yourself. And then her employment, being of a sedentary kind, demands it still more loudly. Her lower limbs require walking, running or dancing. * I do not mean dancing late at night, in convivial parties, for that would be more injurious to her than to you ; and as dangerous to mind and morals as to bodily health.

She also needs society in her amusements more than you. In most instances you would do very well alone ; but she does not relish solitary activity, and it would consequently be less beneficial to her than yourself.

Then, again, * while you would be greatly benefited by the shower-bath, and by swimming, partly for the amusement, she would be better served by the warm bath. Her skin is cold

and active; yours acts very irregularly. Hers is strong enough, if it were set a-going; yours is thin and feeble.

You would find light reading an amusement, not indeed late at night, or in bed, or when greatly fatigued in body, but when fresh and vigorous, and lively and happy. She, on the contrary, would find reading irksome at all times, and would hardly be benefited by it.— Conversation, on the contrary, is the best thing for her.

And thus it would be, through the whole circle of your acquaintance, were these real wants considered. One would require this exercise, another that. One would require this combination of exercise, another a different one. But then all, as a general rule, demand pure air, a cheerful mind, and a warm heart. All require their undivided energies for the time.— You must not be half interested in them, but wholly so.

But I do not expect to give you a whole volume on amusements in the compass of a single letter. All I can reasonably hope to do is to establish in your mind a few correct principles, and then leave the application of these principles to your own good common sense.— Happy will it be for you, and for all concerned

with, or dependent on you, if you make the application wisely and judiciously.

One difficulty in relation to this matter, has been alluded to in connection with another subject. Young women are unwilling to think. Some are more adverse to thinking than yourself. But all, or almost all, are faulty in this particular; and hence the importance of being frequently and earnestly admonished.

Is it necessary to remind you, that there is danger of amusing yourself too much? It would not be necessary to remind your bilious neighbour of it; she will never give up time enough to her amusements. Her great, I might almost say, morbid or diseased conscientiousness, would forbid it, if nothing else should. With regard to yourself, deep principle might be operative to restrain you; but not an over-active, or high-wrought conscientiousness, except in case of diseased nerves and brain. And yet, though I am compelled to remind you that there is such a thing in the world as morbid conscientiousness, it is exceedingly rare. Most persons have too little rather than too much of this commodity. It is a fault of the age, so it seems to me, to ask, What will people say? rather than, What is right? or, What does God say?

Few among us come up to the requisition of the inspired penman. This is true, even in regard to the most sacred things ; how much more so, in regard to the common every-day concerns of life ! How few among us labour from day to day, from hour to hour, from moment to moment, to *do all to the glory of God !*

LETTER V.

EMPLOYMENTS.

MANY things which belong to the subject of employments were anticipated by my last letter. It is, indeed, difficult to draw a line of demarkation between employments and amusements. They blend with and run into each other. Employments sometimes *become* amusements; and amusements, too often, partake of the nature of sober employments.

The word employment, indeed in a very general sense, includes everything which intelligent creatures can do. But there is a more particular sense, in which we frequently use it, viz., to designate or distinguish those avocations, or duties, or exercises, in which we habitually engage, in order to obtain our reputation or our livelihood.

God has kindly made it necessary for mankind to labour, in order that they may eat and drink. That which many regard as a curse,

thus converted into a blessing. It is a blessing, because it prevents idleness, and its long train of dangers. It is a blessing, because it conduces to health ; and this, in a thousand ways.

You are one of those who labour for a support, and who consequently, if you labour right, receive the blessings which are annexed. By means of this labour, you have escaped a thousand temptations and a thousand dangers. You have escaped also many diseases to which you would otherwise have been subjected, as well as much suffering which would have fallen to your lot, had not the diseases with which you have already been afflicted been greatly mitigated in regard to their severity, by your habits of exercise in the house and in the garden.

Some young women have been less fortunate. Their employments have been assigned to them by parents who did not understand their temperaments, or their tendencies to disease. Perhaps they ought to have been housekeepers ; but they have been made milliners or seamstresses. Their temperaments and diseased constitutions required active exercise, and free space ; but they have been deprived of both.

Others, predisposed to scrofula or consump-

tion, to whom active exercise, in the open air, is more necessary, if possible, than to any other class, are plunged into the factory. There, in a vitiated, overheated atmosphere, they spend twelve, fourteen, or sixteen hours of each day, and hardly breathe a better atmosphere when they return to their boarding-houses, and retire to their sleeping-rooms.

Here again, you have been peculiarly fortunate. Had you been consigned, at ten, twelve, or fourteen years of age, to the hot, murky, foul air of the tailor's shop, or the factory, or what is but little better, the confined and often very impure air of a millinery, you would probably have been laid in your grave seven or eight years ago. Or had you survived, your life would have been of little value to yourself, or to those around you.

And yet your constitution is as well fitted for sedentary employments as hundreds and thousands, who are *trained* to them. But observe, if you please, that not all who are trained to an employment pursue it as a means of earning a livelihood. Not a few fall into other business, at least if they do not cripple themselves so as to be unfitted for any other.

That a few die, as the result of a wrong choice of occupation by the parent, (for it is on

parents and masters that the blame must, after all, principally fall,) though a great evil, is an evil not half so great as another which I could name—and which, indeed, I must advert to briefly, in order to complete my plan.

I refer to the deterioration of the race, to which we belong. Now it is alike a doctrine of scripture and reason, that none of us live or die to ourselves. Indeed, such is the structure of society, that we cannot do so, if we would.

Suppose a young woman goes in a factory as well ordered as those of Lowell. Suppose that by virtue of a good constitution, she does not actually become sick. Suppose she is even able to remain six, or eight, or ten years.

Will any one say that because she does not die at the factory, or does not come out of it crippled for life, therefore no great mischief is done? Has the question ever yet been settled, which is the greatest actual loss to society, one person killed outright—or ten, or twenty, or forty injured; some of them greatly injured, for the rest of their lives?

And as the whole tendency of the whole thing is and must be downward—that is, to the deterioration of successive generations—has it ever been ascertained how much more one life

is worth in the present generation, than one in the next, or the third? To explain a little. Suppose a course to be taken in life, with regard to employment, which, while it permits the individual to linger out half her days or more amid many ills, yet with entire certainty entails on offspring the possibility—aye, the necessity—of dying prematurely, and of being good for nothing, except by being a burden to try the patience, and faith, and love, of others. Is it settled that such a course is right?

As the cultivation of our mother earth, in a rational manner, is, after all, the most honourable and most useful employment for our sex, so the kindred occupation of taking care of the house, and feeding the bodies, minds, and hearts of its occupants, is the noblest employment—the blessed prerogative, may I not call it—of your own.

Other occupations indeed there must be, and to some of them, in the good providence of God, you might have been—may yet be, even now—called. But, do not *choose* them. Submit, if you must; nothing more. So of others. They may, in some instances, go to the factory or to sedentary employments, with more of safety to their constitutions and to their progeny

than you; but they, even, will be still better off to do housework.

But whatever may be your choice or your destiny, let it be pursued in the fear of God, and in due obedience to all his laws, physical and moral, as much as may be. If you cannot do all you would desire, you can at least do all in your power. God is not a hard master; he only requires of you what he has given you capacity and opportunity to perform. And never forget, that

"Who does the best her circumstance allows
Does well ; acts nobly ; angels could no more."

One thing of high importance has been more than hinted at, in my last letter. No employment, not even housekeeping, is so healthy as to excuse you from the necessity of spending several hours of each day in your garden. I was going to make an exception to this rule, on account of unfavourable weather, but if you accustom yourself to all sorts of weather there are very few days of spring, summer or autumn, in which you cannot labour more or less in the open air.

Whatever you do, moreover, do it with all your might. It is an old saying, that " Whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well;" to

which might be added another, viz., "Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing with all your might." I do not mean with violence, but with great earnestness. I cannot help respecting the individual who throws his whole soul as it were, into all lawful employments, associations and amusements, be they ever so trivial.

Finally, in making up your mind, in regard to an employment for life—if indeed your life is not already decided for you—do not ask, I say once more, What will people say? At least, if you ask this question at all, let it by all means be an after thought. It is of far less consequence what others think of you, than it is what God and your own conscience think of you. The good opinion of others, I grant, is not to be despised ; but it is of less consequence than some young women imagine.

LETTER VI.

STUDIES, BOOKS, ETC.

AMONG the items of duty to herself, to which the attention of a young woman should be called, as a means of forming her character, as a missionary, is the pursuit of appropriate studies. Do you say that your study days are over? They are never over while life continues. They are never over while you are susceptible of the smallest degree of improvement.

In truth, the business of the schools, you have attended, was not so much to study, as to learn how to study—to obtain the keys of knowledge, rather than unlock her treasures. Some present reward—some grains of gold—there indeed is; but the reward, or treasure, is chiefly in reserve for riper years.

I was once associated with three other individuals, in conducting as many divisions of a large Bible class. Many of our pupils were as old as ourselves—men and women of large and

liberal education. In this case we were obliged to study as teachers, and to study hard; and the Rev. Dr. Anderson, who was one of the four teachers, advised that we should make our reading, during the whole week, to bear upon the subjects of our lesson.

The suggestion was deemed worthy of our attention, and was, to some extent, heeded. Would that it had been more closely attended to on my own part than it was. And you, who are a Sabbath school teacher, may profit from the same suggestion. For if we, who were already in the middle of life or beyond it, were required to study, surely you are.

But suppose you had nothing to do with the Sabbath school. You are a teacher in the public schools. Will not Dr. A.'s suggestion still apply? In truth I know of no occupation—I certainly never followed one—which requires harder study than common or public school-keeping.

Some there are, I well know, who tell us that in conducting small elementary schools, or indeed our larger town schools, little knowledge is required, beyond what is usually obtained beforehand, in the progress of our own attendance on the same class of schools. They tell us that if a teacher loves her school, has a

tact at communicating knowledge, and has a thorough acquaintance with the branches she teaches, such as reading, spelling, defining, writing, grammar, geography, history, physiology, &c., nothing more is necessary.

But granting all this, is there nothing for her to do, in the way of study, who has "passed a good examination," as it is called, and is fairly seated in the pedagogic chair? Is she so well skilled in all the branches I have mentioned of a good English education, as to be already perfect? If so, she is quite different from anything which as a teacher or committee man, I have ever yet met with. The best teachers I have ever known have found themselves profited, at least for a few terms, at the first, in hard study even of these common branches.

Besides, it is not true that we are not benefitted in our profession, by studying those sciences we are not required to teach. For such is the connection and dependence of the whole circle of human science, that everything aids in the understanding of everything else. Other things being equal, one who has studied moral philosophy or even divinity, would teach school better than one who was wholly ignorant of all such subjects.

Again, if there were nothing else to study,

while teaching, you might study the art or *science* of teaching, as well as that of disciplining. We have books now, (though there were none twenty-five years ago,) which, along with our own reflection, will greatly aid us in this important work. I need not enumerate them—it is sufficient to remind you of the fact.

My story of Mr. Emerson would be in place here; but I have given it in my second letter, and need not repeat it. Let it be, however, distinctly understood that every day should find you better qualified for your highly responsible station than ever before; and that consequently every day requires fresh effort, and fresh study.

Perhaps you will say, "But there is a possibility that I may not teach much longer, and therefore it is hardly worth while to waste time on that which after the present season, or at least another term or two, will be of no service to me."

This objection assumes for truth one manifest error. If the great work of woman is, under God, the education of her household, then every possible preparation which she can make as a teacher, will be almost as good a preparation for the discharge of her duties in the family; especially all which relates to the art of discipline.

Besides, you must never forget, that if you would come up to the spirit of your mission, you must only strive to do whatever you are doing in the best possible manner, but also to improve upon yourself from day to day—to *excel yourself*, as some choose to call it.

I know not but I have dwelt too long on this subject of duty in reference to school-keeping, because this, though an important vocation, is but one among many to which young women in our day are called. But I will return to our subject.

Housckeeping, as a science—and such it deserves to be regarded—requires as much study, for aught I know, as the science of teaching. That it has not been studied by most, is cheerfully admitted; but is it a sufficient reason why a thing should never *be*, to say that it has never yet *been*?

What housekeeper is there among us, worthy of the name of housekeeper, who would not be far better fitted for her vocation by studying Physiology and Chemistry, especially the latter? For my own part; I see not how a Christian woman of but common intelligence, should dare in our own time, at least, to make a loaf of bread without a thorough knowledge of Che-

mistry—I mean, provided she makes it in the existing fashion.

In order, moreover, to exert a proper influence over others, the study of mental philosophy seems to me unnecessary. For since your sex is to rule the world, as Mr. Flint expresses it, you ought to be qualified to rule it in righteousness. You ought to understand well the constitutional structure of your subjects. You ought to understand their minds and your own, no less than your and their bodies. Moral philosophy I have already incidentally recommended.

I do not believe it to be necessary that you should dive into all the intricacies of philosophy, mental or moral. It is a *practical* psychologist, I would make you, rather than a theoretical one. In truth, it is a practical life—the formation of every-day character—at which I would aim throughout.

Great importance, in these days, is attached to the study of the French, and Italian, and Spanish, and Latin languages. Now I have no objection to the study of the languages, living or dead, by both sexes, if they have time for it. But have they? Is life long enough to enable those who are obliged—and who ought—to sustain themselves by their own

exertions, to study everything which might be desirable, and at the same time, be thorough in it?

Let me say here, once for all, that in whatever you undertake, you should be thorough. That is, as far as you go, be sure to go right. I have said that at the first you are merely getting hold of the keys of knowledge; but then you must be very *sure* of the keys, or you will make but miserable work in subsequent life.

The mathematics I believe to be of more real importance to you, as a means of strengthening your mental faculties, than the languages. This matter may be carried too far, in some of our schools; but it is not generally so. I think very highly, in females, of a turn for the study of the exact sciences.

Still I admit we can have much of the discipline which the study of the mathematics will secure, by a due attention to natural science. I may have said enough already of Physiology, and perhaps of Chemistry. And yet I am not quite sure of this. Chemistry, for both sexes, if studied in a proper spirit and manner, is one of the noblest and most practical of the sciences.

Closely allied to Chemistry are Botany, Min-

eriology, Geology, &c. Now I have not a taste for these sciences, and shall not therefore be likely to exalt them unduly. Yet I am free to say that I consider them secondary to but two subjects—Chemistry and Natural History. Botany I am *sure* is of vast importance ; Geology I *think* must be.

I have incidentally spoken in praise of Natural History. The natural history of man is first in order, and first in point of importance. And yet, while we have a score or two of Natural Histories of the animals below man—all good, and deserving of the eclat they have received—we have not a single work on the Natural History of our own species, which is worth your perusal.

Such a work, for the young, is yet a desideratum—but I trust will not long remain so. The ingenuity as well as enterprise of the age, will surely bring to the market, intellectually, that for which there is a demand. And it cannot be that a thinking people—a people, at least, who study Hygiene—will long defer to demand such a work.

LETTER VII.

MORAL CHARACTER.

IT IS AN old maxim, in reference to the high tone of female character, that "Caesar's wife should not even be suspected." But there would be less occasion for the application of the maxim to Caesar's wife, if the daughter were what she should be in the outset. As is the daughter, for a general rule, to which no doubt there may be exceptions, so is the wife and the mother.

You will wonder, perhaps, what I can have to say to young women about their morals. Are they not already irreproachable in New England, and indeed all over our Union? Is there a spot, in the wide world, where female education has been so successful in establishing a high standard of female virtue and general character?

Most certainly there is not. I know well to whom I speak. Were I addressing the young

women of central Asia, or even of central Europe, I should address them without hope. Except a favoured few, they would not have virtue and purity enough to understand me, when I speak on such subjects. As it requires a good degree of knowledge to enable us to set a just value on knowledge, so it requires a good deal of virtue and morality to enable us to prize virtue and morality, and to seek for them as for hid treasures.

Remember then—I repeat the sentiment—that you do not live in the dark ages, nor in yet more darkened regions of the earth. You live in the *nineteenth century*, and are to aid in forming character for the *twentieth*. You do not live in the heart of Africa or South America, or in the backwoods of America. Your lot is more favourably cast. You are exalted in heaven, as it were, in point of privileges.

Let your character, then, correspond to the high station you are to occupy. Fill your minds with the great idea that you are to co-operate with Christ in the noble work of human redemption. In this particular you can hardly have your views too exalted. You are not only to co-operate with, but to represent, or

as some theologians say, produce the Saviour in your own heart, and in the hearts of others.

Of course I do not forget that I have already, in one or two instances, directed your attention to this great subject. But you will excuse me, I know, for referring to it again. It is, to me, when I think of the true position of woman in society, a most delightful theme. It would be so, were I to speak of it as a mere matter of philosophy.

But I do not refer to it as a matter of mere philosophy, at least of human philosophy. It is indeed philosophy, but it is *Christian* philosophy. It has been baptized. The great idea of Paul—"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus;" in other words, "In your whole character, be Christ's true representatives"—could never have had any other than a divine origin.

Do not be afraid of either philosophy or Christianity, if you would accomplish your mission. They both come from the skies. They are both for you. They are for woman. They are for young women. They are for woman, moreover, in every condition of home society—educated or uneducated. It does not require a deep knowledge of the sciences to

read of Jesus, and learn of him, and know how to imitate him.

I have no special objection to your studying Chesterfield. As you may obtain nourishment to the body from almost every kind of food, so your immortal part may find somewhat to aid its progress and growth in the driest and most unchristian volumes on character. I have not a doubt you may gain something in spiritual growth, by reading the works of Confucius, Gaudama, and Zoroaster.

Did I say I had *no* objection to your studying Chesterfield? I mean not so much. It would be a waste of time, if no more. The old vulgar maxim that half a loaf is better than no loaf at all, will not apply in this case, because this is no occasion for accepting the half-loaf. You may as well have the whole, and therefore, on the great Christian principle that binds you to take the best course, you would be culpable not to take the whole. Your time is short at the longest. You have no right to read Confucius, or Socrates, or Chesterfield; for you may just as well read Jesus Christ.

Be entreated then to read him—and what is more, learn to represent him. Learn to do this, moreover, at every step you take. It is not enough that your general intention is to imitate

or represent him.' There are thousands of your sex, and ten thousand of mine, who talk well, and receive into their heads good sound philosophy and Christianity; but that is nearly all. For the far greater part, it produces no practical effect on the life. It

"Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart."

It seems to me reserved, by Providence, for woman to make a practical application of philosophy and Christianity to life, as it is. Indeed, as I shall say more fully hereafter, I doubt whether the application will ever be made till woman makes it. Or, in the language of Mr. Flint, if the world is to be made better, woman must take the lead in improving it.

For what means the great fact that more females embrace Christianity—lowered down as its standard may be—than males? What means it, the degraded and depressed as woman ever has been and still is, she is yet much purer and lovelier than man? What means the great fact, that trodden down in the streets as she has been, she has founded hospitals and many other noble and charitable institutions? What means the still greater fact, that despite of the demands of society that woman should

scrve—as Martha of Bethany did, and as anxiously—woman was the frequent follower of Jesus; clung longest to the foot of the cross, and was earliest at the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection?

If you ever hear the charge made that woman is the weaker vessel, and is so because she is more ready than our sex to embrace Christianity—when you hear the same slur in other forms, thousands of them—do not give yourself any trouble about it. In the first place, it often comes from a class of men who would do much better, if they would set themselves about the work of self-improvement, than to endeavour to detract from the merit of a sex to which, after all, they owe under God all that they now are, which is worth possessing, as well as much that they have, most unhappily for themselves, cast off.

Indeed it is not a little in behalf of female character, if not of female piety, that these self-same traducers of your self do, after all, secretly respect it. Not so much I grant, as if they had not heard the repeated slanders which have been retailed from dissolute writers and wholesale libertines. Still there is an innate feeling of respect which they cannot get rid of, if they would.

You may hence see that you have power—that you do, as a matter of fact, rule the world. For if you have but a slight influence over the bad, your influence is, of course, much greater with the good. And this is true in regard to your influence with both sexes. Be encouraged, then. Have special courage, moreover, when I tell you that young women have more influence with our sex, than old ones. I do not say it should be so ; that would be to discuss quite another question. I speak now only of what is.

But I must close this letter. It need not be long, if my general views are correct ; because however elevated the character of woman—however influential she may be, and however great the duties she owes to herself to qualify herself for fulfilling her mission—she will do most for herself while laboring most for others. He that watereth shall himself be watered, is not only scriptural, but in accordance with every day's observation of all who have their eyes open to what is going on, either in the world without or that within.

In subsequent letters I will, therefore, endeavor to point out, in my own plain way, some of the numerous and weighty duties you owe to others.

LETTER VIII.

ASSOCIATES IN THE FAMILY.

EVERY young woman has a work to do in the family. It was not Cain alone to whom the All mighty Maker of heaven and earth once said, "to thee shall be his desire, (Abel's) and thou shalt rule over him." The command is to all elder brothers and sisters, as well as to the first, It comes down to you, my dear friend, among the rest.

Your mission, I say, then—so far as others are concerned—begins in the family where you were born, and still reside. You have younger brothers and sisters. Over these you have rule. You have it, indeed in virtue of the general law already so frequently alluded to, that woman rules the world; but you have it still more directly, if possible, in the divine determination—except in case of some strange exception, like that of Esau and Jacob—that the younger shall serve the elder.

Do not misunderstand me, however. The greatest of rulers, after all, is he or she who serves most. "To thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him," does not mean that there shall be servility, in the usual sense of the term, on the one hand, or tyranny on the other. It means simply, that the younger is made dependent on the older for a thousand things and favor which Providence has put it in the power of the older, as a wise ruler over his subjects, to supply.

I have said that the greatest of rulers is he who serves most. Will you pardon, here, a momentary digression—just to illustrate this great truth? Did not our Divine Master say, "I am among you as he that serveth?" Does not the Father of the Universe serve or minister to his creatures continually; and has he not done so for thousands of years? In truth, is not the best earthly monarch, he who serves most? If you doubt, read history, both sacred and profane.

Be this then the spirit of your rule over the younger members of the family where you reside, whether they are your brothers and sisters or not. Those who are not related to you by blood, have a measure of the same dependence on you that Abel had on Cain, and may

consequently claim the same sort of service, in the way of ruling over them, that Abel had a right to claim.

Fulfil, then, your mission. Oh, how many have looked at the mark on Cain, and yet gone away, and betrayed their high trust almost as effectually as he? They have not, it is true, murdered the body, nor even in a direct manner the soul. But they have done the latter indirectly. They have left it to be starved, when they were expected to feed it.

Would Cain have been guiltless had he only suffered Abel to die from neglect? And are you guiltless, who only suffer a soul to perish, at your very side, from sheer inattention?

Suppose, however, you do more than this. Instead of exerting a proper authority and influence—the authority and influence of a heavenly example—suppose you set, in any respect a bad example, and thus not merely *suffer* an immortal mind to sink for want of care, but actually *thrust* it down to hell?

I may express myself strongly—but have I not a right to do so? Nay, is it not my duty to do so? How many young women have been employed at the toilet or in reading Byron or Bulwer, just to while away that time God had given them for the sole purpose of enabling

them to snatch a younger brother, sister or dependent, from eternal woe ! On how many women young as yourself, and situated like yourself, has time hung so heavily, that they did not seem to know what to do with it, except by murdering it, and thus adding to it another crime, equally heinous ;—that of practically murdering one or more of those immortal spirits for whom time was made !

Woman made to rule the world ? And does this mean no more than the frequent fulsome compliment, Woman is pretty ? How is she to rule it ? And when and where is she to begin, if not in the family ? Is she to learn first the art of murdering time, and influence, and spirit itself ? Or is she to learn it at the threshold of her existence ? Is she to rule as Cain did ? or shall the example of Cain, with five thousand years of additional experience, recorded in sacred and profane history, teach her a better lesson ?

Do you say, by way of reply, that all this devolves, by God's appointment, on your parents—that they have experience in education and guidance which you cannot, of course, be expected to possess—and that Scripture and reason and common sense, aye, and conscience herself. unite in proclaiming them to be the

rulers of the family ; and *not* the brother or the sister ?

Your objection may seem plausible, but is it satisfactory ? Parents *are* the rulers of their children according to your statement ; and are appointed to be so. And this appointment is on account of their superior age, power, and experience. But does this conflict at all with your sphere of action ? Rather, does the rule you are to bear, conflict at all with theirs ? Does it not, on the contrary, tend to sustain and strengthen it ?

For look, but a moment, at consequences. Suppose every elder son and daughter in the whole world were to co-operate with parents, and with the great Redeemer, in the work of training each younger child in the way he should go ; how long would it be before every land would become Emanuel's ? How long before holiness to the Lord would be every where written ? How long before the whole earth would again bloom, as one mighty Eden ?

Observe, if you please, that you are not required to do, in the family, what you *cannot* but only what you *can*. You are not required, in fact, to lay aside your labours, or even your amusements. If it were so, your objection

would have more weight. You are to take care of yourself in the first place, no doubt. All you have to do is, while thus taking care of yourself, to do what you can for others.

And this brings me to a practical part of my letter, which is, the ways and means of exerting that rule of which I have been speaking. For to young women who have, as has been admitted, but a very limited experience, it is not to be expected general assertions or abstract statements will be sufficient. They ask, and are entitled to receive more specific directions.

Let me say, however, negatively, in the outset, that you are not to rule over the younger brother or sister by mere reasoning with them, or by any landmarks, verbal or written. You are not to accomplish your work—fulfil your mission—so much by direct efforts, of any sort, as by more indirect means and measures.

The first thing to which I will direct your attention is their amusements. Join them, as much as you can, in their little plays. Surely you can demean yourself in this way, for a few moments—can you not? What though you are their superior in age by twelve, or twenty years? Old as I am, I could not only endure most of their amusements, but, had I time to spare for it, could actually enjoy them.

In doing this, however, be a little careful, especially at first, not to interfere, too much, with their own free agency. Children, like some other animals, are more easily led than driven. Play with them, I say. Set them a good example—one of truth, fairness, equity, and kindness. Teach them, even, by good language, by gentle tones, and kind looks.

One thing should be said preliminary to all this, however. You need, in the beginning, and all the way through, to have the love of infancy and childhood. Without this, you will accomplish but little. Most women, indeed, possess this qualification ; but there are some anomalies—not to say monsters—in creation. I have even heard of a few who actually hated children. But you, as I well know, are not of that unhappy number.

Never suppose it is beneath your dignity to be found amusing yourself in the company of young children. It was, I believe, one of the king Henry's, who, on being caught at play with his child, made an apology. But no apology was needed from a father. ~~Still less~~ would it be needed from a mother or a sister.

And if fondness for the young should be in you a little deficient, it is a plant which can be easily cultivated. Nothing is needed, if you

have conscience on your side, and regard it as a matter of duty, but to begin to be with them and watch over them. The more you do this, the more you will be interested in them, and even love them. Doing good always produces love. And, remember, that the great motive I have presented to urge you to this work, is the desire to do good to the young—to be a missionary among them, and mould their characters.

Nor need you be discouraged by a little roughness, and even rudeness on the part of the young, especially boys. You have already taught school long enough, to be somewhat acquainted, in this respect, with human nature. Besides, it is precisely because human nature is not what it should be, that your influence and example will be peculiarly valuable.

You have heard perhaps a story of Plato and his dissolute nephew. The latter had become so openly and deeply vicious that his friends, all but Plato, disowned him—practically turned him out of doors. The latter took him in. When his friends remonstrated, Plato replied: "My object in taking him into my family was to show him, by example, how much better it is to do well than to do ill."

The same spirit, and the same object it is

that I aim at, principally, in recommending you to join the sports of your infantile and childish associates. But there are a thousand places and circumstances besides at their sports, in which you can show them by your example, how much better it is to do well than to do ill. Seize on all such opportunities and make the most of them.

And if need requires that I should say so, you have very high example and authority for doing thus with the young. Our saviour did not hesitate, again and again, to notice little children. He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. Will you, then, refuse to bless them, as far as you can? Will you, above all, refuse their society, or think it beneath you to mingle in it in order to do good?

LETTER IX

ASSOCIATES IN THE FAMILY.

You have other associates in the family, besides its younger members, over whom your example may have influence. True, you may do most with the *very* young. The tenderest twig is most easily directed in the right way. But you may do much with your older brothers and sisters, especially the former.

There is a period in the lives of all young men when they begin to feel disposed to break loose from all restraint, both parental and fraternal. It is the period when passion and appetite struggle for sway, and too often obtain the mastery:

During this dangerous period of existence, this most dangerous part of life's voyage, nothing is more needed than the wise, powerful, but yet gentle influence of good, virtuous, and intelligent sisters, especially elder sisters. They are always of great importance to young

men, but are of more importance at this time than at any, I was going to say, of all others.

It was a rule among the ancient oriental nations, that their young princes, up to the age of fifteen or sixteen years, should be committed to the care, company, and training of females. This is the more remarkable from the fact, that it took place at a period in the history of our world, when female character and female duty were less perfectly understood than they now are.

In any event, it throws much light on the great subject of woman's mission. In these days, the people are the rulers of the nations, and not those who have been generally denominated the princes. These last are set up and put down at pleasure. One day they are supported on the shoulders of the populace ; the next day they flee before their faces.

To educate the princes and rulers of modern days, therefore, woman must be, emphatically, an educator of the people. But to educate the people—I do not say to *instruct* them merely—a right influence in each family is most efficient ; and above all, a right female influence.

Doubt no longer, then, my dear sister, whether or not woman's mission is important ;

nor whether Mr. Flint has been guilty either of flattery or exaggeration. Believe and obey. Believe that by the constitution of society, as God has established it, in his providence, you have your feet on the necks of all the kings or potentates of future ages; and that, under God, whom you will you can put down, and whom you will you can set up. And believing this, make haste to govern yourself accordingly.

Young men will not seek the advice or solicit the influence of elder sisters. They are too proud for all that. Especially so are they at the time when that influence and counsel are most needed; I mean at the above-mentioned stormy period of existence. Nor can you reason them out of their folly. Plato could not have reasoned his dissolute nephew out of his dissipation. Another course—a very different one—must be pursued, if you would hope for success.

When John Newton, while a young man and engaged to a certain young woman, was employed in the slave trade abroad, he was subjected to all those temptations which are common to the circumstances in which he was placed, and before which so many fall. But, as he tells us, he was often saved by the re-

collection of home and the following consideration: "If I should yield to the temptation, and she should know it, what would she think of me?"

Now if you were the sister of a thousand brothers, for whom you had laboured in season and out of season, by reproof and by example, all those brothers would have regard, more or less, for your good opinion. It is not in the nature of things that it should be otherwise. True, they might not have as great a regard for you, and as much reluctance to give you pain as John Newton had, in reference to the object of his special affection. Still you would have—I repeat it—an irresistible influence over their minds and hearts and habits.

I remember full well another anecdote, which it may not be out of place to repeat. Dr. Rush was a man of thought and observation, and in particular an observer of young men. He was indeed a father to the young men of Philadelphia, especially to those who were diseased. They resorted to him in great numbers when their pride, perhaps, would have kept them from seeking counsel elsewhere. And in reply to his oft repeated inquiry? Were you brought up in a family where there were older sisters

who took a deep interest in your welfare, he almost always received a cold negative.

All this may serve to illustrate and to prove my main position, that you have a powerful influence for good over your brothers, even at an age when you would very little expect it. Granted that your influence may be for evil as well as good, if you are not careful ; still it depends on your choice which kind of influence it shall be. If you act up to the spirit of your mission, you need have no fears for the consequences.

You may ask, perhaps, what are some of the methods by which you can influence, favorably, your brothers who are younger than yourself, otherwise or beyond what you may do by a wise and happy example. I might mention many. I might speak of efforts to render them more fond of home, more sober, more chaste, more temperate, &c. I might speak of the various ways in which you might gain a hold on their affections in conversation, and of the books and lessons by means of which you might do them good. On some of these points, however, I may perhaps speak at another time.

So far as regards your treatment of the very young in whose society your lot may be cast,

you should remember, in the first place, that you were once, yourself, very young. "When I was a child, I spake as a child; I thought as a child, I understood as a child," said a venerable old man. That man would have been a good associate and help to young children, and precisely for the reasons which grow out of this statement.

She who knows and fully feels that she once spake, thought, and understood as a child, will be most likely to be able to place herself in imagination, in their stead, and know what will most interest them.

She will remember they have *curiosity*, and will labor to gratify it, in every reasonable manner. She will never refuse to answer their questions, (unless they are asked in an impertinent or improper manner,) merely because they are childish ones. She will remember that what seems small to her, may appear quite otherwise, and does seem quite otherwise, to little children.

She will remember that they know but in part, in regard to those things which have come under their observation the most fully; and that of many things which seem plain and familiar to her, simply because she has had a

longer experience than they, they know nothing at all.

She will remember that they make most progress, mental or moral, when they receive, so to speak, the smallest amount of food at a time. One main idea, at a time, will be usually as much as they can seize, or hold, or appreciate. This one idea you may exhibit in as many ways and shapes—that is, you may illustrate it as much—as you please. But too much information at one time, disturbs and hinders the free operations of the mind—the intellectual stomach—as certainly as too much food disturbs the just operations of the stomach, and impairs digestion.

An intelligent friend of mine, a man of forty years of age, used to insist that no main or leading idea in a sermon or other grave discourse, was quite enough for any body. But, however this may be with adults, it is certainly so, to a much greater extent than most persons are aware, with little children. Happy those associates of the young who understand these and other preliminaries for their task, and act according to their knowledge !

CHAPTER X.

ASSOCIATES IN THE FAMILY.

YOUNG woman should never despair of doing good, even as long as they remain members of the family. They may have older brothers and sisters, for whom they have it in their power to perform kind offices. There may be domestics in the family, who need their instructions and aid. Or if none of these, they will have parents.

These last, you have. Your parents, it is true, are already intelligent. But can you, therefore, do nothing for them? On the contrary, can you not do the more for them, on this very account? One of the great difficulties in the way of doing good any where is, as I said before, such a want of intelligence, virtue, health, &c., as leaves no basis on which to build. This stumbling-stone, Divine Providence has taken out of your way.

Few persons can have more influence with
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parents than you. Not so much, it is true, by virtue of reasoning with them as otherwise. It is commonly said—and not without truth—that people do not alter their opinions in any considerable degree after they are forty years of age. You will not therefore expect so much from your parents as if they were thirty-five instead of sixty. But you may and ought to expect to do something for them.

Indeed if you were to depend upon mere reasoning with them, I say again, you might almost despair of changing greatly their opinions and habits. I will not, however, go the length of affirming that you could accomplish nothing at all in this way ; for I suppose you could do a little. Their opinions are not so invulnerable as those of some persons, because they are and always have been thinking people.

It is those who never think—who take all their knowledge, if knowledge it can be called, upon trust or at the hand of tradition—who cannot and will not be reasoned out of their opinions. *They know they are right !* and they know it *because* they know it.

But you understand enough of human nature to perceive very clearly that what you do with aged parents, must be done very cau-

tiously and patiently. You may indeed make haste to do them good—you must always make haste, or at least work with all your might—but, in this case, you must “make haste slowly.” You must teach as if you taught not, as those who were greater and better than you have already done.

Sometimes you may indeed venture on direct discussion; in regard to manners, minds, customs, religion and politics. When you do this, however, let it be done with the greatest modesty which is possible. In a few instances you may use the Socratic mode of reasoning with them. Generally, however, a still better way will be to ask simply what they think of such and such opinions or views.

But you may do more, much more, by modestly mingling your conversation with theirs, and gently changing the ordinary topics of the conversation, for those which are more profitable. The world is a 74 gun ship, under full sail, a friend of mine used to say, and must have its course; you cannot alter it. But it has been altered in its course, I said; why cannot it be again? And if its course is wrong and its force almost irresistible, the greater is the obligation, as it seems to me, to do all we can to change it.

In like manner, the greater the difficulty of changing the course—the spirit, rather—of the conversation at table and elsewhere in the family circle, the greater the necessity that we should labour with all our might, when we can do no more; to bring about, gradually, a reformation of this kind.

As I have already intimated, it is the spirit of the conversation, rather than its forms, that needs your plastic, changing, persevering hand. I do not doubt but you may do something in regard to the latter, especially by your example. You will, however, be much more successful in regard to the former.

I have allowed to your example. This brings me at once to a most important topic. The power of example has long been known. That it is more powerful than precept, every where, has become almost a proverb. In endeavouring to make changes in the circumstances to which I now refer, example will be your principal instrument.

Labour then, O my sister, that your example may prove an instrument for good to your advanced—I might say, aged parents. You owe them a debt you can hardly repay, were this your only motive to activity. But you have other and higher motives. You are a

missionary; and the family circle is, to a very great extent, your field of operation.

When I speak of your example, I mean a great deal. Your conversation, your reading, your dress, your eating and drinking, even, are parts of your example. In truth, your whole life is example, for good or for evil. And is not only example in general, it is example in particular. It is example, to your brothers and sisters, as we have seen already. It is example, also, to your parents.

On this point—the power of example—over parents, even when those parents are somewhat advanced in years, I speak with confidence, because I speak from experience. Or if this seems like boasting, I will say from observation. In more than one instance have I known great changes wrought in the old by the spirit of Christ in their children and grandchildren.

This is, in truth, one cause of that remarkable character we sometimes meet with in life—a green old age. My recollection loves to linger among some of these cases of life's journey, which half a century's observation and some travel have disclosed to my wondering view. And I hope to see more of this

humanity descending to the tomb, and yet clad in "living green."

May you be instrumental in producing some of these blessed results. Do not say you can do nothing in this way; it is not so. You can do much. We never know how much we can accomplish, till we *try*. That little word, "try," here, as well as elsewhere, has done wonders; and may do wonders again.

One thought, and by way of encouragement. You are now young, but you expect to be old. You *hope* to be, at least. How much would you give to possess the character, in age, of which I have just spoken? How much would you give to pass down the hill of life, somewhat as you ascended it? How much would you give to enjoy a green old age?

You may enjoy this, and so may I, if we will. Shall I tell you the secret? It belongs to no fraternity, free or bond—accepted or unaccepted. It is without grips and passwords, and badges and orders. It is the property of all who diligently seek it. It is easy to obtain, and easy to preserve inviolable.

It consists, simply, in preparing others for this pleasant autumnal verdure—this living green in old age. The very fulfilment of your mission in the family and elsewhere, will be

the surest passport not only to the verdant fields beyond Jordan, but to those on this side of it.

May you be wise in this particular. May you take the friendly hints of this letter, and act upon them. For myself, I am separated, and long have been, from those who were my progenitors, so that the good I propose to you has not been greatly in my power. May I never be thus separated from my own children.

LETTER XI.

ASSOCIATES BEYOND THE FAMILY.

LET us, however, go a little farther than the pale of the family. Let us go abroad, beyond its precincts, among other associates. Here, again, you have two ways of operating on mind and heart, as you had in the family. You may do much, as you can there, by *precept*; but still more by *example*.

Do not suppose that your obligations are lessened towards those who are around you, because they do not belong to your own family. I speak now of the *nature* of the obligation, not of the *degree* of its strength. In this there is a wide difference.

For though the elder brothers and sisters of the first family of mankind were under *special* obligation to *keep* those who were their juniors of their own family, they were not at liberty *not* to keep others, so far as it was in their power. Our Saviour was set over the younger

brothers and sisters of Joseph and Mary, if any such there were ; but this did not release him from the obligation voluntarily assumed, of living and dying for the rest of us. And in this particular, no less than in others, he is, as I suppose, to be our pattern.

We must never forget that by the Divine plan—and especially under the Christian dispensation—all mankind constitute one great family, and only one. And a striking peculiarity of the Christian scheme consists in this, that as we are all one family, we are to love one another, even as Christ our elder brother loved us.

In carrying out the great purpose of your life—that of being a missionary to those around you—you will, therefore, ever remember this great truth, that all mankind are, by the life and death of Christ, made your brethren and sisters. Some are younger some are older. For some you can do much, for others little. And if you say that there are portions of mankind for whom you can do nothing at all, (though this opinion might easily be proved incorrect,) this does not remove the obligation you are under, to labour for those whom you *can* reach.

You can reach, of course, the little circle of

relatives God has assigned you. There are uncles, aunts, and cousins. Some of them you see often ; others but seldom. With some of them you have much influence ; with others, but little. With some, you hold correspondence by writing ; with others, never.

There is Belinda. She is one of the most intimate relatives you have. You see her every week, if not oftener ; besides which you exchange from twelve to twenty notes of correspondence with her in a year. What if she is two or three, or even four years younger than yourself ? Your position with respect to her, added to your relationship, give you, as you know, an almost illimitable influence over her. You can mould her almost any shape you please. And though there are many things in her character, with which you have no sympathy, she has some excellencies.

Here then is a missionary field for you—the corner of one at least. For in operating upon the mind and heart of Belinda, and shaping her character for two worlds, you are insensibly moulding and forming the character of a multitude of others. I speak now not merely with reference to half a dozen other relations in the same connection and circle, but also in reference to the whole circle of her acquaintance.

Now I need not tell you that Belinda is supremely selfish, in almost all she says and does. I need not remind you, that she is encouraging the same thing in her friends and associates. You know she has influence, and that *she* knows it, and desires it, and loves to wield it. You know the power of smiles and amiability.

Then, again, you know that influence does not stop at the remote points of Belinda's range. Those whom she influences have also their circle, and these again theirs, and so on—I know not how far, neither do you. I speak here, moreover, of a single generation—that which is now upon the stage of action.

But you must also remember that each of these individuals, connected with all these points and circles of influence, is to have her influence upon each coming generation down to the close of time—nay, more; throughout eternity. You will recollect what I said in my first letter on this great subject.

In exerting a power over Belinda, therefore, young as she is, and susceptible, you are doing an immense work. The only doubt in the matter is, *whether you can influence her*. But this question I might almost be willing to leave to your own judgment and decision. You can-

not deny that in this direction, if in no other, you have power.

Nor was there ever, I again say, a better opportunity for an individual to break the ice of human selfishness, than this. You know the drift of the whole family; that as it was in regard to the idolatry of Athens of old—their hearts were wholly given to it—so in regard to the selfishness which at times exists here—their hearts are almost wholly given to that. Indeed it is nearly as much their idol, for aught I can see, as the thirty thousand gods of Athens were theirs.

On what does the conversation of the family turn—that of Belinda in particular—but on the possession of certain objects which it is supposed will confer happiness? When and where is a single word said, which expresses earnest, prayerful desire for the happiness of others, except so far as such happiness would have a connection with their own? I am afraid such a word is never uttered.

Reflect but a moment, and you will not fail to see that in almost every word and action—the thoughts you cannot so well discern as God can—of the whole conversation, for example, of the whole family of which Belinda is the representative, has a bearing upon what they shall

have, or possess ; or at most on what somebody shall have or possess, whose having or possessing, will in one way or another minister to their own happiness. Or if there be a single exception to the truth of this remark, it is found in the fact, that here and there—indeed quite too often—the possessions of others are spoken of as matters of regret, and in the spirit of envy.

Now I say, you can do something towards effecting a change in the whole current of this conversation. I say still more ; you can do more, in the relation you sustain to them and the confidence they repose in you, than any other, I might almost say than all other, individuals on earth.

You can do something by your own conversation while you are *with* them. You can give the current a more benevolent turn. You can approve of benevolent effort, of which mention is made in their presence. You can even introduce topics of benevolence.

I do not say you should *introduce* these topics, at every time you have an opportunity to speak ; nor that you should insist on their listening. God only requires you to do what you can, in consistency with your own free agency. In making you a missionary in the domestic sphere—the most difficult and the

most important of all missionary spheres—he does not require of you impossibilities. He is never a hard master.

But he does, I say again, require of you to do what you can. And he requires of you to do it boldly and efficiently. You are not to shrink from what you conceive to be your duty, for fear of offending people. There is, indeed, a choice to be exercised as to the time when you speak ; but then you are to speak.

Much, very much depends upon the manner of doing it. As I said in regard to changing the current of thought, or attempting to alter the opinions of nearer friends than cousins, so I say in regard to these : you can ask questions, or offer suggestions, or state modestly the opinions of others, and ask what they think of them. And you can, if you deem it proper, add, with the same modesty, your own opinion.

And if you have elicited their attention, and directed it to your favourite subject, so that they are interested in it, be satisfied. You have done a great deal. Strive to keep the subject before them long enough for them to understand it, if you can. Do not go to the extreme, however, of retaining their attention, because you have for once secured it, as *long* as you

can. Better that you should leave off while they are a little "hungry," so to speak, than to push your new dish of mental food till they are cloyed with it.

Do not be deterred from the plan you propose, by the fear of offending them, and thus losing your influence. I am aware, well aware, that much is made of this consideration, in the world we live in. Thousands who would do good, are hindered from doing so by the fear that they shall seem to be singular, and thus lose their influence.

They would advocate, by example and by precept, certain changes in manners, habits, dress, &c. They verily believe such changes would greatly conduce to human happiness. But we shall be thought singular, they say to themselves. Or, "how will it look, or seem." And they refrain from doing it. They have not moral courage to dare to be singular. Not so much in every instance on account of the loss they would feel in a loss of influence over others, as on account of the public or general loss which would be sustained.

Now I am one of those who believe that the better days which are coming to the world, will never come till such unworthy fears, in the minds of good people, are got rid of. I do

not, indeed, believe it a thing desirable, in itself considered, that we should be singular; but I do believe it to be often a Christian duty.

Waiving this matter, however—I mean the question of what is duty, generally, as a Christian—I come to the question, What is your duty in your own circumstances, as a reasonable young woman, to Belinda? Are you to be restrained or withheld from doing your duty to her and her family, by any fears of the kind to which I have just alluded?

In the first place, they expect, always, that you will be a little eccentric, as they call it, in opinion; nor do they like you the worse for it. Secondly, if you *do* nothing for fear of *accomplishing* nothing, things will remain as they long have been in the family. "Nothing venture, nothing have," you know. Thirdly, you will not lose their influence; it is the excuse of indolence, and a want of moral courage.

Another method, however, in which you may do good—carry out your missionary plan,—is by lending books and papers of the right stamp, or by influencing them to borrow or buy them of others. This, by the way, would be a means of opening the door, often, to conversation on the topics which you desire:

It will add greatly to the interest they will

take in your new views, if they see them in print; and still more if they see them in print over your own signature. With the idea of a thing being in print, is often associated, in the human mind, an idea of authority which does not belong to it. Still you have as good a right to avail yourself of this prejudice, in order to do good, as the majority of our writers have in order to do evil. On this subject, doing good with your pen, I will say more at another time.

And yet, after all, your example, both as regards externals and internals, habits, manners, dress, matters belonging to health, intellectual cultivation, moral development, &c., will do more for Belinda and all her friends in the way of setting them right, than precept. Example is almost, but not quite omnipotent.

I have fixed my mind's eye on Belinda, as a means of illustrating my subject, and of making suggestions about the modes of doing good, carrying out the great work to which I trust you have, for life, devoted yourself.

But it is not Belinda alone for whom you are to live and labor;—I mean beyond the precincts of the family. You have some dozen or a score of your more distant relatives, male and

and female, over whom you have almost as much influence as over Belinda. Nor are the methods of operating on Belinda and her circle, which I have suggested, the only methods which might have been suggested ; much less the only ones of which you might avail yourself in the case of others.

Your young friend, Solomon W——, is an example of male relatives, in whom you take an interest. Now did it ever occur to you to ask yourself how much good you might do him ? Say not that you are almost tired of him—his dandyism and blustering—and at times resolved to give him up, as lost. The greater his boasting, and swaggering, and dandyism, the greater the necessity that you should reclaim him, if possible.

Do you think it an impossibility ? I do not ; and I have reasons. What has become of his confirmed, and as it was once thought, inveterate, habit of hanging to the end of a cigar ? Has he not reformed, in this particular ? But how happened it ; Was it not owing to the disgrace into which his foul habit brought him in the estimation of his mother, and sisters, and other friends—you among the rest ?

But if you and they have been successful in breaking up a habit so strong, in a person like

Solomon, in what case will you have occasion for despair? The truth is, all mankind are susceptible of being influenced by each other more or less, especially by those whom they love and esteem; and, above all else, by youthful and virtuous woman.

LETTER XII.

MERE ACQUAINTANCES.

EVERY young woman has acquaintances over whom she has great influence, whose welfare she prizes almost as highly as her own. It is not the ties of consanguinity alone that bind us, though these are doubtless ordained of God, that they may bind us, when nothing else will.

But if you find yourself attached to any of your acquaintance as strongly as you are to your remoter kindred—perhaps still more strongly, for such has been, in some instances, the fact—do not, for one moment, doubt your obligation to exert yourself in their behalf.

For surely if you love or esteem them as highly as you do your relatives—and especially if you have reason to suppose the feeling is reciprocated—it is an opportunity to do

good that ought not lightly to be passed over. Their happiness, their health, intellectual well-being, and moral elevation, are of as much importance in the sight of God as they would be, if they were your relatives. They are the relations of somebody.

Besides, as we have already seen, the whole human race are but one great family. All are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; and whatever ignorance and blindness and prejudice may think, all have one common interest. All are brethren and sisters, and the sooner they regard themselves as such, the better.

I am not at all sure but you may have a better and more abiding influence over those who are merely acquaintances, than over your own relatives. There is, oftentimes, a strange feeling of—I know not what to call it, unless it were envy—unwillingness to be influenced by a relation, lest it should be, in effect, the acknowledgment of superiority on their part.

“A prophet is not without honour except in his own country,” has been often quoted to prove a fact which I believe is well attested by human experience. And yet the *whole* passage, as it stands on the sacred pages, is

seldom quoted. It is, “A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and *in his own house*.” Plainly implying that the same difficulties which lie in our way on account of familiarity with each other, prevent our doing good not only to our neighbours, but also to our relations. And the whole maxim implies that the farther removed we are from an individual, the more likely we are to be sure of his honour and esteem, provided, however, he acknowledges our authority.

In other words, if there be feelings of envy and suspicion, and ill-will and hatred, against an individual, they are found, as a general rule, not among strangers, but among his own relatives and countrymen.

Now you are to do all the good you can among your relatives, as we have already seen. So long as they have no dislike towards you, which would serve to detract from the good you would do them, so much the better, I repeat it, for your purpose; for the more accessible they are.

But then you must lose no opportunity of doing all the good you can abroad among your acquaintances. And the same means and measures to which I have faintly alluded in the preceding letter will be applicable there.

You can influence and somewhat change the current of conversation and feeling, in all the various ways in which you can influence those who are at the same time both acquaintances and relatives.

Some hold that the fewer acquaintances they have the better. The reason they assign is, because they shall thus be more free. But free from what? Is it not a freedom from the necessity which custom has imposed of dressing and undressing, giving and receiving calls, preparing entertainments, &c.?

I grant that if we are to be enslaved thus to arbitrary custom, it were better that our acquaintances should be few. But is there any real necessity of this? The necessity of the *calls* I admit. They are seldom too frequent. But does this involve a necessity of that attention to dress which is commonly manifested? Are there not a thousand things connected with dress, in fashionable life, which neither good taste nor neatness demands?

And as for sumptuous and costly entertainments, when acquaintances and friends visit each other, no person who reflects will insist on their necessity, I am sure. Better for all concerned that a greater simplicity should prevail. But on both these topics, dress and

entertainments, I may say more on some future occasion.

In general, I think you may properly rejoice in having a long list of acquaintances; and instead of wishing to strike from the list any of them, you should desire to add to it. Not, of course, for the sake of personal gratification or display, but that you may do them good, as God shall give opportunity.

LETTER XIII.

CORRESPONDENTS.

It seems to me a duty of young women, both to themselves and others, to have a list of correspondents. This list may be longer or shorter; but on the principles which have been developed in the preceding letter, the larger the better, as it enlarges, in the same proportion, your field of labour as a missionary. It also enables you to do good to some, without seeing them.

I cannot help regretting that the usual methods of instruction in our schools are such as tend to create a dislike to letter writing. Composition studied, and therefore arbitrary in its forms, is taught in the far greater number of instances, instead of letter writing. So that instead of having the latter easy, natural, unaffected—a sort of second nature, it is apt to become stiff, irksome, and, in fact, almost useless.

Letter writing is naturally a mere substitute for conversation. If the latter be what it ought to be—and it can never become what it ought to be until there is a thorough reform in the family, so that from the earliest years of infancy, everything is grammatically correct—the former might be. She who converses correctly, has nothing to do but to talk correctly, as it were, on paper.

Now if letter writing were of this description, and if we were but accustomed to it, from the first, as should be the case, how delightful would it be to young women to write letters to each other, and to the friends generally ! Instead of thinking; almost with dread, of the day when they must write a letter, they would rejoice in a prospect of a leisure hour for this purpose ; and only wish that the days were longer than they now are, that they might write much more frequently.

Instead of saying with a yawn, and with apparent disgust, To-morrow I shall have to write to Miss S., and O how I dread to have to-morrow come ! they would be apt to say, To-morrow I do hope I shall have time to write some letters ; or, To-morrow I hope I shall have time to write to Miss S. and Miss G. ; and O how I wish to have to-morrow come !

I am exceedingly anxious to have letter writing or epistolatory correspondence placed on its proper basis. I long to see it regarded as a pastime, instead of a piece of drudgery—as a recreation, rather than a task. Instead of feeling that we must write, because others have written to us, and expect a return, I desire greatly to have it done as a gratuity; as an act of benevolence. The great Christian maxim, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is applicable here, as well as elsewhere.

But I did not intend to dwell long on epistolary correspondence generally; though a letter on this great subject might, perchance, be useful to you. All I intend now is to suggest to you the importance of doing good through this medium. It is one of the ways which Providence points out to us; and I do not believe we have a right to neglect it. We can take up the pen and write a dozen times for once that we can make a visit, where the distance is considerable.

This reminds me of one more difficulty, in regard to letter writing, which most young women seem to think well nigh insurmountable, viz., a notion they have imbibed, that if they write a letter, it must be a long one. True it is that most young women have a great

deal to say in conversation, and therefore should have a great deal to say when they write. But, then, if we have but little to say, let us be contented with writing but little. A short letter may, sometimes, do as much good to others, if not prove quite so useful to ourselves, as a long one.

The idea—I repeat it—of filling a sheet, when you can, is a good one; but if you cannot fill but half a sheet, or even one-fourth, why very well—do that. Indeed, half a dozen lines to a friend are sometimes productive of great good. Be particularly careful, even, to be short, when you have it in your heart to do good, and are going to insert, in your letter, some timely caution or friendly admonition. If we are about to administer medicine, it is a kindness to contrive to get it down our patient's throat as soon as possible..

When you wish to make a friendly suggestion to your acquaintance, whether the distance be great or little, you may often say things by letter which you would not like to say otherwise, and which, but for the invention of letters and letter writing, you would never say. Be grateful then, to God, for this invaluable privilege; and in the fulfilment of your mission, strive to make a good use of it.

This business of letter writing is sometimes carried on with great success and much mutual benefit between friends, who do not reside a mile apart. It has been thus made a means of mutually improving their spelling, their chiography, their style, and their composition, as well as of doing good to each other, socially and morally. Let me here relate an anecdote.

Two friends, among the Green Mountains of New England, who scarcely could put two ideas together, when required to "write composition," began the practice of writing letters to each other. One was eleven, the other twelve. At first these letters were very crude, and some of them very childish things.

But the correspondence continued as many as twelve or fifteen, indeed did not entirely cease in twenty or twenty-five years. Sometimes they wrote to each other once a week; sometimes it was only once a month. The letters were often handed to each other at meeting in school or elsewhere; for they resided so very near together, that the letters might almost have been thrown from house to house.

Now I will not undertake to say exactly how much influence this had on the parties concerned, for we are exceedingly liable, in doing such things, to put effects for causes, and causes

for effects ; as well as to attribute effects to wrong causes. But, as a matter of fact, these two young persons both became greatly changed in their whole habits and lives. They both became authors, one of them distinguished ; both became doers of good ; especially eminent as teachers ; and were it of consequence to be mentioned in this connection, both became skilled in chiography.

I might add even more concerning the missionary spirit by which these individuals became actuated in after life, but I forbear ; because, I say again, it is not certain how much, in these cases is fairly attributable to the habit of letter writing. I forgot to mention that they often criticised on each other's style, and admonished each other in regard to conduct ; and one of them is accustomed to acknowledge to his friends that the counsels of his correspondent, at a certain period, gave a favourable change to his whole course of life.

If young women, as a general rule, were to endeavour to do good by frequent correspondence with their friends, no one can tell, till the day of judgment shall reveal it, half the good they might accomplish. I firmly believe it would add, in the proportion of thirty to fifty per

cent, to the beauty of their handwriting. It would also greatly improve their style of writing as well as of conversation. It is, in truth, a practical way of studying English Grammar.

But this is not all, nor the most. There is a blessedness in it, that they only know who have enjoyed it. The value of social life, considered *as* life merely, without much regard to life's great ends, is doubled and even tripled by it. And then, if successful in your efforts to amend or reform your friend, as you most certainly would be, in some instances at least, you would have occasion in due time to know the truth of what James said on a certain occasion—That he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.

LETTER XIV.

DOING GOOD WITH THE PEN.

DOING good to your correspondents, is one species of doing good with your pen, and this I have already enjoined to you. But there are other ways in which you may employ your pen usefully, besides letter writing.

Some young women have a turn for poetry. A few stanzas in the corner of a newspaper, over their own signature, open or covert, delights them greatly. Sometimes, moreover, it delights others, and they are thus enabled to do a great deal of good.

Observe, however, that very much which is called poetry does not deserve the name. It is mere scribbling, or worse than this ; it is mere sound, without sense. But never attempt any but prose writing than to make such silly work, as do some young people of both sexes.

I am not aware that you have ever tried your skill at this sort of writing. I am glad you have not. You might possibly succeed ; but you would be more likely to fail. Better by far that you should confine yourself to simple prose. In this, I am quite sure, from the specimens I have seen, you will find yourself quite at home, and do much good.

Whether you can write books for the young, or indeed for any class of the community, so as to make it a means of support, I very much doubt. I mention this last circumstance, because, though I know less about your necessities than you may suppose, yet I take for granted every young woman ought to support herself if she can. But authors, for various reasons, though always as a general rule, poorly paid, are much more poorly paid than they were twenty-five years ago. There has been such an inundation of foreign books, which cost the publishers nothing for copyright, that authors have received comparatively little encouragement, except in the case of a few favoured ones of great acquired reputation.

Should you attempt authorship, you will probably do most good in making Sabbath School books. But be slow and cautious, and adhere as much as possible to matters of fact ;

at least you should be careful to have these as your basis.

I think, however, that your "forte" is in writing for our periodicals. These are numerous, and of every grade of character. True it is, that they seldom make any compensation to their contributors; so that you will probably feel justified in writing but little. Still, the little you do, if done right, may be of incalculable utility. In a few instances, however, you may receive a moderate compensation for your articles.

If your heart is set on doing good, from time to time in this way, watch the operations of your mind, and when you find it full of a subject, so to speak, seize your first leisure hour to let it spin off at the tip of your pen. Wait, however, till you have thought the matter all over.

Let me counsel you a little, in regard to a few things which experience alone will teach, but which it will cost you many long years to acquire; or which, if you wait to acquire, you may have to acquire at very great cost, such as the loss of your eyes, or health, or life.

Do not write late in the evening. Many young people think this is their best hour; and a few sit up very late indeed. I knew

one young man, who boasted that he could write best from midnight to two o'clock. I have known many who preferred from ten to twelve, or one. Never yield to the temptation to sit up later than ten o'clock ; and it is not well to write even as late as that.

Be careful about your sight. Do not let the lamp-light fall directly on your eyes, at least very long at a time. You may find yourself attacked with the disease called amaurosis if you do. Avoid also too feeble a light. Oil is cheaper than eyes. Above all, take special care to avoid the united effect of lamp-light and heat.

Even strong heat only, acting directly on the eyes, may cause you much trouble. Sitting in a semicircle around hot fire-places, pleasant as from early association it is to many, will be apt to injure your eyes, so as to give you occasion to use spectacles long before you reach the age of Methuselah.

Do not strive to be witty ; it is enough if you are wise. Aim, in the first place, to do good. Secondly, endeavour to be good-natured. Thirdly, be sprightly. If wit comes, do not despise or reject it ; but never strain for it. It is the most useless thing, in conversation and

in writing, when it does not flow freely, that can possibly be. As Young, the poet, has well said :—

“ It hoists more sail to run against a rock.”

But I must conclude this letter. My next will be longer, for I have more to say.

LETTER XV.

PARTICULAR FRIENDSHIPS.

“ WITHOUT a friend the world is but a wilderness,” said an old school-book, in which, nearly half a century ago, I used to read daily lessons at the primary or district school. “ A man may have a thousand intimate acquaintances,” said the same book, farther on, “ and not one friend among them all.” “ If you have one friend,” said the writer, in conclusion, “ think yourself happy.”

Unhappily for the well-being of our race, this statement is not so wide from the truth as many individuals might at first view suppose. For not a few people can be found who pass a long life in this wilderness world, as the American Preceptor called it, without a single real friend. Real friendship is a plant rarely found on this terrestrial sphere.

To be willing to die for another has been sometimes regarded as the best and surest test

of friendship; hence the story of Damon and Pythias has been told, and the conduct of the heroic friend has been lauded in all ages. And we have high authority, as it would seem, for this low view of the highest friendship.—“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

But have we understood correctly the import of this remarkable declaration? Was it more than to prepare the way for what immediately followed—viz., “A new commandment givo I unto you; that ye love one another as I have loved you?”

And how had he loved them? How, indeed, but by *living* for them? And this living for them he was about to set his seal to, by *dying* for them. In my own view the statement that no man had exhibited higher love than to die for his friend, was designed to illustrate his own higher love and friendship by placing it in contrast.

Now this willingness to live and die for each other, actually carried into daily and hourly life, is the test of Christian friendship. Merely to be willing to die for one another, is a good test of heathen friendship, but the Gospel suggests a higher, and more difficult. It costs not half the effect to die for a friend that it does to

live for him. Any one can do the former; some have done it;—few, if any, except our Saviour and the martyrs, have come up to the spirit of the latter.

God has instituted the family, in part, no doubt, as a means of securing this point—that of having a few friends. In the first place, it establishes, or ought to establish, the friendship of conjugal life. Secondly, the friendship of parents for children, and children for parents. Thirdly, the friendship of brothers and sisters.

Whoso friendship is thus secured—where the duties of these various relationships are properly discharged—the members of a family are ready to do anything whatever which may be necessary for the common or general good of the family. And not only this, but they are ready to undergo any privation or suffering which may be necessary.

To be a little more practical. You are required to be the true friend of your parents, and your brothers and sisters. They are also required to be friends to you. But their friendship for you, you cannot wholly control. It is true, as the old adage says, they who wish to have friends, should first show themselves friendly. Your friendship for them, duly carried out, will have some effect to render them

friendly to you ; but it will not wholly form anew, that character which has been fixed or stationary for fifteen or twenty years.

The truth is, few parents are the real friends of their children. They may be willing to suffer for them, and possibly even to die for them. Such love you may have for your brothers and sisters. But these instinctive or family friendships seldom rise higher than this. Where will you find the father, mother, brother, sister, son, or daughter, who is daily and hourly labouring to live for his relatives—whose intellectual and spiritual life is, as it were, bound up in theirs ?

Do you ask what it is to which I refer, when I speak so often of living and dying for each other, as the test of friendship ? Or, at least, what is it in particular, which I mean, by living for each other ? Or, still more specifically, what, according to my own view, are some of the offices of this living friendship ?

The reply in few words is The greatest and highest office of friendship is to make wiser and better, especially the latter. When parents or other family relations make it their constant task to correct the faults, remove the ignorance, and develop all the good tendencies of those with whom God has thus brought them in

contact, then, and only then, do they become true friends.

I might leave it with you to apply the principles I have here laid down to your own circumstances. You know whether in giving you parents and other near relatives—as good and as friendly, to say the least, as the average—God has, at the same time, given you friends ; or whether, notwithstanding the abundance of their instinctive love, the world is but a wilderness and a solitary place to you.

You know whether their great aim has been to make you what God designed you to be ; whether they have trained you for him, or whether they have simply consulted their own convenience in their whole course, without so much as once a day asking what God would have them to do with, and for you.

For myself I can scarcely believe that you have been the subjects of family arrangements which exclude God and Christ, and which are essentially infidel. And yet such is the general course, even in Christian families. Children are almost seldom trained to be the missionaries of Christ—to do what he would do in their circumstances—as if Christ had never lived and died for them.

Need I repeat that children not thus trained

—I mean trained or educated with a lower *aim* than this—are without friends, so far as that education is concerned? That the parents who only labour to bring up their children in accordance with the general sentiment of the religious public, are not actuated by any thing like true friendship?

But I may seem to forget whom I am addressing. I am only preparing the way for you, so that you may ascertain whether or not you have any true friends. For if not, and if the world is but a wilderness, without at least *one* such, then it is high time to seek for one.

Let me advert to one or two rules, by which you may be assisted in your inquiries.

Do those persons who are nearest to you, who love you most, who think they are your friends, and who would in any event wish to be so—do they speak of you habitually, as their property, or as God's? Do they speak of you, I say, as their property, and of your death—should you sicken and die—as their loss, or as God's? Or if they speak of other parents, as losing *their* children, how do they speak in that case?

Do they labor, from day to day, to correct your faults? Or do they, for fear of giving you pain or humbling you in your own estimation,

suffer your wrong habits to go unreproved and uncorrected? Do they even worse than this—do they endeavour to gloss them over, or even conceal them; and do they teach you by example to do the same? • Or if they *do none* of these things, now that your character is more fully formed, did they thus, when you were from seven or eight to fifteen or twenty?

If you should have reason to believe, on due examination, that neither your parents, nor any of your brothers or sisters, have ever learned to act the part of true friendship, and that it is too late for you parents to do so, consider well whether you have a brother or a sister that may be fashioned by God and yourself for this kind office.

An elder brother will be, in many respects, a suitable person for your purpose. He would be so, at least, were he as much in your society as an elder sister. A female resident in the family—some maiden lady in whom you have confidence—will answer well your ends, when there is no suitable brother or sister.

Better go out of the family, however than to pass through the world friendless. Some young woman whom you know in the neighbourhood, may be the individual to assist you in the great work of becoming wiser and better. But it

should be some one who knows you pretty intimately; who sees you pretty often; and who is herself striving to become what you desire to be.

Of course there can be no objection to more than one friend. But so rare are individuals to be found who are willing to bear the burdens for the sake of the rewards of friendship, that you may think yourself highly favored in finding and securing one. I never knew a person who had more than three. Fewer, by far, have none at all, than three or even four.

When I say I never knew a person who had more than three true friends, I do not mean to affirm, unwisely, that no individual ever had a greater number; or even that none of my own acquaintances ever had a greater number. I only speak of what I know, and testify of what I have seen. They may have had friends of whom I was ignorant.

LETTER XVI.

SOCIETY OF THE OTHER SEX.

You will have seen, by this time that I regard you as a social—not a solitary being. You see I attach great importance to friendship and sympathy; not solely on account of the pleasure we feel in rejoicing with those who rejoice, and weeping with those who weep, but also on the ground of utility—their instrumentality in making us wiser and better, and enabling us the better to fulfil our mission.

And why should we not regard friendship and social life as greatly important? Has not the Creator regarded them thus? Is it not written on the whole constitution of human nature, as well as on surrounding things, that man is for society? Why, then, were it otherwise, do we have the family and the church?

I have somewhere in my writings—I believe in my “Letters to Young Men”—remarked that God might have made our world, had he

chosen to do so, on the solitary plan. Or rather, had he chosen to do it, he might have cut up our planet into some 800,000,000 or 1,000,000,000 of smaller worlds, placed a human being on each, and set him and his globe to whirling, as he has this. And he might, too, have so arranged things that he might have had possession of it, for thousands of years, "sole monarch" of all he surveyed.

But such is not the scheme under which we live. It is far otherwise. Providence has laid the plan of a great family. And not content with sketching the design, he has done all he could, consistently with human free agency, to put it in successful operation. Mankind, of both sexes, are designed for social life, and for friendship.

I said, in my last, that, on many accounts, an elder brother was apt to prov& a valuable friend. But I mentioned, at the same time, a difficulty—that brothers and sisters are not enough in the society of each other to make them valuable friends. This is the fact when brothers remain in the family. But they are, often, early *separated* from the family—which *increases the difficulty*.

It is therefore a wise ordinance of the great Creator that an attachment to the other sex,

beyond the precincts of the family, should at an early age spring up, and gradually develop itself, especially when it meets with a corresponding feeling from those towards whom it is directed. The result is, in some instances, a friendship as lasting as life itself.

When this is the favourable result, one great end of the divine mind, in so forming our natures as to have them point in such a direction, is answered. All the failures of the parents and other members of the family are thus, in some measure, made up, or may be so.

But observe that I have said, in relation to this subject, *in some instances*. Would that such were the general result, or that it were so, in a majority of cases, Would that it were something more, even, than a rare exception to the general rule. You will not find it thus, in one case of ten.

There are various reasons for this. One is a proper want of knowledge on this great subject. Young women have seldom, if ever, received any valuable instruction from those whose delightful office it should have been to point their offspring to what is alike their high destiny and duty. Parents have not been, as

a general rule, the true friends of their children.

Another reason why a genuine attachment and union of the sexes does not secure the point of having at least one true friend, and that for life, is, that young men are as uninformed on this subject as young women. They even think much less of conjugal life, as a means of forming and elevating their character, than young women do.

But another reason still, is the want of a disposition to do as well as they know. For neither young women nor young men come up to known duty, in this particular. They willingly suffer fancy, passion, and appetite to mislead them. They are also misled by many other influences.

But the most prolific cause of the unfortunate result to which I have alluded, is the great fact, that the society of the sexes is not properly managed. Young women, very often, enter into matrimonial life as ignorant of the character of their associate as ignorant can be. No wonder they so seldom find a friend, and that we have, in the language of Dr. Watts, so "few happy matches."

"'Tis friendship makes the bondage sweet,"

he says ; and he says truly. And it is the want of true friendship, in matrimonial life, that more than all things else below the sun, makes life a scene of discord, and sometimes a burden.

Now, as surely as God has made matrimony a duty on the part of both sexes, and required them to be trained to look forward to it as a duty, just so surely has he designed friendship to be one great end of that matrimony. This points out, of course, the first and great qualification you are to seek, in a companion of the other sex. The first great question, then, you are to ask, in seeking but a friend for life, is, Have God and nature formed him for friendship.

You will be disposed to interrupt me here, and say, But can there be no society, or at least, no intimate friendship for the other sex, but what points to matrimony ? Is the circle of male friendships thus narrow ?

Not necessarily, I admit. Friendships for the opposite sex are occasionally formed, which are highly valuable ; but which have not the slightest bearing on the point of which I have been speaking. I have known some such. Generally, however, it is not so.

A young man may select a young woman,

or rather a woman of middle age, as a valuable friend, without entertaining a particular affection for her; but, for some reason or other, a young woman of from fifteen to thirty, will find it more difficult. Indeed it is a course which I cannot recommend it to you to attempt, out of the family in which you were born.

I have said that a young man may sometimes have for an intimate friend, a middle-aged woman. There is one reason why friends of opposite sexes are particularly desirable. They may discover faults which otherwise might never be detected. Woman, especially, is eagle-eyed to discover *our* faults. She seems, on some points, to know us, as it were, by intuition. And I have reason for believing that, in a few particulars, our sex are able to detect faults in yours, which might elude all your own vigilance.

All this points to matrimony, as indispensable to the perfection of human character. It is, in truth, my most deliberate conviction, that every individual of the human race should be trained to look forward to matrimonial life as a duty—I had almost said a *sacred* duty. They should regard it as such primarily, if not chiefly, for the sake of friendship.

The young, I know, especially young women, are apt to regard themselves at perfect liberty on this great subject. Indeed I know of nothing about which they are so unwilling to brook restraint, or even feel obligation. "If a young woman is not free in this matter," said a female acquaintance of mine, "I know not where she is so."

Most certainly, I said, she is free as air in this particular as in all others, with one exception ; she is not free to do wrong. She is under obligation to obey the laws of God, wherever she finds them. And if marriage is one of the divine laws—one too, which has been of six thousand years standing, and which has never yet been repealed—is she not bound to conform to it ?

It does not follow, that she is bound to marry, at any particular age, especially at an *early* age. Nor has God required her to connect herself thus, for life, with strangers. He has only made the general requisition, and pointed out the general laws by which she should be governed, in this respect; leaving it to science, and experience, and common sense, to make the application.

Many of my thoughts on this great subject, you have probably seen developed in the

“Young Man’s Guide.” True, I was there writing for the eye of young men more directly; but also, indirectly, for that of young women. Not a few of the very same qualifications which a young man should seek in a female friend for life, should be sought also by young women in the opposite sex.

But there are thoughts not found in that work, which it seems to me might be useful to you; and which I will present for your consideration in my next letter. And there are other thoughts there which ought to be amplified. But this letter is sufficiently extended, and I will close it when I have added one thought more.

It is this. The conditions and circumstances of matrimonial life, when the qualifications of the parties are such as they ought to be, and when they are mutually adapted to each other, are such that woman can far better fulfil her mission in this relation than in any other. It brings her into contact with society, in a way and manner, and with a weight of influence, to which she must, without it, ever remain a stranger.

LETTER XVII.

FRIENDSHIPS WITH THE OTHER SEX.

ONE essential qualification of a friend and companion for life is, as I said in my last letter, a constitutional capability. Have God and nature formed him for friendship? should be with you, as I said, a great and important question. And I still adhere to this opinion. .

I do not mean to say, or to intimate, that God has so formed some men that they are absolutely incapable of friendship. No such thing. Undoubtedly the world animal, every species of it, was formed, like the world vegetable, on the great principle of endless variety of character. Still there can be no doubt that every individual of our race might be so trained and circumstanced, as to be capable of a greater or less degree of friendship.

And yet it would not be true to say, that every individual of our race *has* been thus trained. Our education is so selfish in its cha-

racter—that of the family, no less than that of the school—that our natures, as they appear at twelve, fifteen, or twenty, are often entirely unfitted for the great work of being friendly.

You have had ample opportunity, considering your age, for verifying the truth of what I now assert. You have been as ready, almost so as myself, to complain of human selfishness, in its various forms. You have found, as you thought, some of the strongest manifestations of it in our sex. You have found it among your acquaintance, if not your relatives. You have found it at the school-room, at the social party, and elsewhere. In short, you have found it wherever you have found boys and young men. And more than this, you have sometimes been discouraged.

But it should not be so. You do not forget what Solomon says:—that though he had not found one true woman among a thousand, he had been a little more successful among his own sex. One man among a thousand have I found, says he. And I think the proportion in our day, and in Christian countries, if not as great as it should be, is much greater than one in a thousand in the ranks of both sexes.

There are young men who care for others. There are those who remember that there is

some body else in the world besides themselves. There are those who have friendly feelings towards others—who have *moments* of their life, at the least, in which they desired to do them good.

You will discover it in their whole deportment. You will discover it in the respect they show for their mothers and sisters, and other female friends. You will discover it in their treatment of infancy and childhood. You will discover it—you *must* ere now have discovered it at the public schools.

I grant, indeed, that such exhibitions of a capacity for forming real friendship may be rare; and I admit, most cheerfully, what I have known you and many other young women urge, that all this which I have mentioned, is often mere pretext—done for effect. Nevertheless there are some noble and hearty exceptions.

On this point, however, I wish to be understood. I am far enough from believing, that there is no mixture of selfishness with the desire which is occasionally found, to please and make happy. I would not endorse for the perfection, absolutely and unqualifiedly, of any young man in the world. All seek their own, more or less, not another's good.

Still you will find, along with the native and acquired selfishness of young men, quite a sprinkling of benevolence. You have found it already among some of your own circle; you will not doubt that it can be found among others. You will not believe that your own relatives and acquaintances are superior to those of every body else.

Or, if you still say that when they take in their arms the crying infant, or reach forth the helping hand to the child who has fallen in the street, or listen to its prattle, it is all to please the mother, or sisters, or other friends, and is consequently still selfish in its character; you will not deny, of course, that these deeds, with a benevolent outside, are daily and hourly performed. There is at least the *semblance* of benevolence.

Now I must put in a claim just at this point. Can you believe that there is nothing genuine in all this? Grant that the counterfeit by far exceeds the genuine; is there, therefore, no genuine? So much smoke, and yet no fire?

Do you seriously believe it? I am sure you cannot.

The counterfeit, as I maintain, implies the genuine. More even than this, it proves its high value. The more frequent the counter-

feit, as a general rule, the greater the worth of the genuine. Men do not usually drive a very large business in counterfeiting that which they know society will regard as valueless.

You have I know, many difficulties to encounter. It is not always, nor indeed often, easy to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit. There is a risk to be run. Not so great, however, where good sense is brought into requisition, as in other circumstances.—Matrimony is not quite a lottery; at least it need not be so. God never intended it should be. Still there is room for mistake; and there should be. This is one part of the trial of your character.

One of the difficulties you have to encounter is, in the fact that young men whom you meet at your age, do often while in your presence, assume the borrowed character already alluded to; while custom does not permit you to see them much in other circumstances.—You are almost compelled to see them where custom requires them to act this borrowed part.

Were you to see them at their homes more frequently, and in their accustomed dress, employments, and society, it would be otherwise.

You might then judge of their real character, with considerable exactness and certainty.— Grant to woman but this privilege, and compel her to exercise it, and the complaint that marriage is a lottery, and male friendships a mere mockery, would ere long pass into desuetude.

She might, indeed, in too many instances, for a time, make blunders. She might be governed in her selection by mere whim or caprice, or fancy ; or sometimes by an undue regard to property, rank, or other factitious circumstances. A majority, however, of the wise, would make a more rational choice. There would be, with these, a due regard for friendship, or at least for the capacity to be friendly ; and the world would not fail to discover it, and in process of time, to imitate it.

But though you cannot control all the circumstances of life, you can do every much. If you cannot shape the company to which you are admitted, you can very greatly shape that to which you admit others. Or if, in extending your invitations to those around you, it should seem expedient to you to exercise the truly republican right of choice ; still it will give you an opportunity to exercise some degree of choice in regard to your more intimate male associates. It will enable you to judge

who in the company is worthy of your preference.

Not, it is true, if your parties are confined to the evening hours ; nor, above all, if you do not break up till midnight or afterward. It is a miserable season between nine or ten in the evening, (the hour when all good people ought, as a general rule, to retire,) and twelve, or one at night, to study character.

Worse still is it, when accompanied by the song, the dance, the supper, or the wine, or by any two of these. One of the first two of these, for an early hour or so, under the eye of judicious older persons, might be tolerable ; but beyond this, good taste should not permit you to go.

Worst of all, however, when you attempt to study character at late night hours, and alone. But, on this point, I forgot that my cautions are not needed. Your society, male and female, is of a class that voluntarily breaks up at the hour of closing business—the hour when nature, and philosophy, and physiology alike demand it.

Your custom of encouraging parties of young people, both by precept and example, to meet at an early hour of the afternoon, and to break up immediately after “ tea,” (as the third meal used to be called,) or at most at eight or

nine o'clock, is worthy of all admiration, and all imitation. I have thought of it a thousand times, and always with much pleasure. Should you do nothing else, while you live, in the way of reforming the erroneous habits of society, than to set this bright example in your neighbourhood, you will have the consolation of not having lived wholly in vain. For though the custom may not, at present, be largely followed, yet the hour is coming when it will stand out like a beautiful oasis in the monotony of life's Sahara, and be copied perhaps by thousands and millions.

If you ask *when*, you propose a question which I cannot answer. I know not whether it will be in fifty years, five hundred, or five thousand. Indeed it does not belong to my mission to attain to any certainty about time and seasons, which God hath put in his own power. Enough perhaps, for you and me, if we do our duty, and leave the future to Him who sees the end from the beginning.

You may say, as you have sometimes said before, that I have large faith. It may be so; it certainly should be so. And I wish you to have. I am fully assured, both from Scripture and the nature of things, that God hath in reserve for us, great things. And that to bring

to pass these great things, woman, in the daily and hourly fulfilment of her mission, is to be a most important and efficient instrument.

But woman, in order to carry out her mission in the best manner, must, I say again, have one male friend. She may do much alone, I grant—I have already granted it. She may do much with the aid and sympathy of female friendship. Nothing, however, at least comparatively nothing, to what she may do when aided by a worthy friend of kindred spirit from the opposite sex. Matrimony not only doubles the joys of life, but it doubles and triples, yea, and quadruples its efficiency for good, both to the parties themselves and to the world.

I may seem to you digressing. My main purpose in this letter, was to tell you how to overcome the difficulties you must meet with, in the selection of a truly worthy friend and companion for life. I wished to make many preliminary remarks, however. These I have now made. Unexpectedly, they have taken up so much space that I must defer the rest to another opportunity.

LETTER XVIII.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A TRUE FRIEND.

Do you never pray? But why should I ask such a question? I know you are a woman of prayer. Ask, then, the Divine guidance, that what I shall say may be not only said wisely, but properly and kindly received, and may be productive of good results.

I have alluded to the difficulties you have to encounter in your endeavours to determine, for yourself, whether a young man is formed for—is capable of friendship. These difficulties, I have told you, though great are not wholly insurmountable. They have been met and overcome. And what has been done, in this respect at least, may be done again.

If young men regard any thing beyond their own gratification, either immediate or remote, you cannot be much in their society without finding it out. But if, on the contrary, self, and the exaltation and felicity of self, be, with them,

the all in all of life, this disposition too, may not unfrequently be detected.

Selfishness will show itself, in all the varied forms of conversation. It will always be endeavouring to make itself the standard in intelligence, morals, politics, religion, and every thing that comes up in conversation. It will too, always, endeavour to be *the hero* of the *story* or the *circle*. It will never be so well satisfied with others as with itself.

Benevolence, on the contrary, respects much more the opinions and feelings of others. It is willing, to be the hero of the story, but also willing, and nay, sometimes desirous that others should be. It does not find other men and things perfect; but, however great its dissatisfaction with others, it is much more dissatisfied with itself.

There is as wide a difference—almost so—between the young man who, through all the changes and chances of an afternoon's conversation, seek to make others pleased with themselves and happy, and the selfish being who is seeking only his own happiness in all he says and does, as there is between the bright inhabitants of the realms of bliss, and those of the pit that is bottomless.

When you find the former trait of character

fully developed, you have found one indication of a heart formed for friendship. Observe, however, that I say one indication only, for every thing has its counterfeits; and this quality may be counterfeited as well as others.

A gentleman whom I well knew, was going over the Atlantic to Liverpool. On board the packet were two Englishmen, of fine appearance, and the most attractive kindness. Their external benevolence to all the passengers, whatever their age, sex or color, won the hearts of all, and of my friend among the rest. Judge then, if you can, of his surprise when he found they were both atheists of the rankest sort. Nor were they at their own homes very much respected.

I recollect an acquaintance which I made with a young man, about thirty years ago, in Virginia. No one could exceed him in the kind external attentions he paid to the wants and woes of others. His politeness and gentlemanly deportment so wrought upon the heart of one grave matron, who was not wholly ignorant of his atheistic principles, that she gave him her daughter (whose young heart he had won long before), though she lived to regret it. He proved to be a cold, calculating, miserly man, as far removed from the benevolence of

that gospel which the mother professed, but whose leading principles she practically disregarded,* as could well be imagined. Beauty, it has been said, is but skin deep—and so of mere politeness.

But how shall the genuine, in this case, be distinguished from the counterfeit? I answer by a long and intimate acquaintance. I mean particular, however, rather than intimate; for intimacy, under the circumstances, can hardly be expected. You must see him frequently and in ever varying circumstances. If this can be accomplished, you will probably gain your point. His selfishness, if that be a predominating trait, will show itself somewhere.

You may understand a good deal about his general character and spirit, if you can ascertain how he treats his own mothers and sisters. The young man who is truly friendly at home may, by possibility, be friendly elsewhere; but he who never said or did a kind thing to those who have done so much for him, is quite unworthy of your confidence or your love. But I have spoken of all this in another letter.

*It is no part of Christianity to select as a companion for a daughter, one who possesses mere external qualifications.—These are not despised; but they are secondary to a good heart.

It is not impossible, I grant, that he may be reformed. The old maxim—"a reformed rake makes the best husband," might be very well, but for one difficulty, which is that a rake is not very susceptible of being reformed. But I should have almost as strong a hope of your being able to reform a rake, as a cold, calculating, selfish man; or one even who was not trained to benevolence.

And this reminds me of certain things which I have seen during the last fifty years, in the world of family education, against the influence of which you must watch with the utmost solicitude. The young of the already risen generation, and still more those of the rising one, have been trained to be helped, rather than to help themselves or others.

The Gospel principle requires us to help others rather than ourselves; or rather to help ourselves *in* helping others. The young man and young woman should be early thrown upon their own resources; or, in other words, required to help themselves all they can, and only to call on others for help when they have already done all they can for themselves. They should, in one word, be among the world of mankind, as our great Master was; as those that serve.

We laugh, as well we may, at the folly of our southern brethren, in training their families to be waited on, rather than to wait on others. And yet how much better are the effects of white slavery, in this respect, than black? And for once that we laugh at others' folly in this respect, we ought to laugh twice, at least, at our own.

Our fathers and mothers of former generations had large families of eight, ten, twelve, or fifteen children, and their necessities compelled them to constant physical labor. The result was, that the children were compelled to take care of themselves, and either to supply many of their wants by their own exertions, or else have them unsupplied. Whereas now, with smaller families and less occasion to employ every moment of time in procuring for them the necessaries of life, we not only furnish them with many luxuries, but also wait on them, and supply their every want by our own exertions.

The consequences are that the present generation, relieved by over-kind parents, from the necessity of helping themselves, or the family in which they reside, grow up with less energy of body or mind, and with *vastly less* of com-

mon benevolence than the generations past : as well as a vast increase of selfishness.

I have seen mothers of the present generation, who not only perform all the house-work of their own families, and take care of from six to ten, or twelve children, but also do a thousand things—such are their habits of industry—which the young ought to perform for themselves. I have, in like manner, seen fathers who not only do every thing for themselves, but also a great many unnecessary things for the young. And as the final result, their children having never learned to take care of themselves, much less to help others, are never good for any thing. And unless I greatly misapprehend the state of society, matters are, in this respect, daily growing worse and worse.

Great care will, therefore, be necessary, in selecting a friend, lest he should prove to be one of those very unfortunate young men, whose infatuated parents were in the habit of doing every thing for him, and under the idea of doing him a kindness, have done him a great and lasting injury. His habitual selfishness would be to you a source of almost infinite vexation and trouble.

Do not count with much confidence on your power to reform him. It is certainly possible,

as I have before said, that he is within the bounds of reformation, but it is only possible. Selfishness, when made a part of us, as it were—bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh—is not so easily removed as you may imagine.—I should nearly as soon hope to make a valuable friend of a person already dead and buried, as of one who has had every thing done for him, instead of being thrown upon his own resources.

Observe, however, I say again, that in a world like this, you must not expect or hope for absolute and unqualified perfection; nor even for a very high degree of it. Enough, perhaps, if, in your search, you find what I call a capacity for friendship. Enough, perhaps, if you find the germs of what you desire. But these *germs* there must be; they are indispensable.

Whenever you find a young man possessed of but the faintest degree of general benevolence—a desire to live for others, and to make others happy in all the circumstances of his life—who in all his every-day concerns is among men as “he that doth serve,” and not as he that is *to be served*; and who remembers that

‘Love, and love only, is the loan for love,’

and that he only is fit for the high office of friend, adviser, and companion of the female sex, who is ever ready to show himself friendly, remember you have found a gem. It may, perhaps, need a good deal of polishing; it may even be better adapted to the society of others than of yourself; still it is a gem, more priceless than those of Peru and Goleonda.

Not that the true spirit of Gospel benevolence is all you should desire in a companion and friend for life, though I cannot help thinking it would include every thing. Would not a character, like that of our Saviour, include every qualification of true and lasting friendship? And are there not those among us who are his disciples? If so, they have at least the germs of what is necessary—when more highly cultivated—to be true and lasting;—I should perhaps say *everlasting* friendship. *

But I have exhausted, and more than exhausted the space I had assigned myself for preliminaries; and yet seem hardly to have begun to present my thoughts on this topic.—In my next, I will endeavour to descend a little more into particulars.

LETTER XIX.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS.

UNDER the general head of Benevolence, as I have said more than once already, we might include almost every other qualification for friendship, whether large or small. The indulgence of a single bad habit, without remorse or regret—I mean when it is known as such—conflicts most certainly with the laws of true benevolence. And yet it may not be amiss to speak of some of these habits separately, as either disqualifying us for conjugal friendship, or furnishing evidence of other disqualifications.

Thus, no young man that is duly enlightened by the Gospel of Christ, and by the public sentiment, so as to see that the use of tobacco is not only offensive to a large portion of female society, but absolutely incompatible with the golden rule, which requires us to do to others as we would wish them in similar circumstances to do to us, and yet persists in his foolish, not to say wicked habit, is fit for the

friendship, or even for the intimate society of a young woman.

Now you can certainly detect this habit in a young man. He cannot conceal it, if he would ; at least without a degree of hypocrisy which would be, of itself, another disqualification for your friendship. I mean by this that you can certainly detect the habit, if you are as much in his society as the nature of the case requires. If his teeth, and perspiration do not reveal the secret, his clothes will. They retain the odour of this virulent narcotic with a most wonderful tenacity, and for a long time. But I hardly need say this to a young woman of New England.

The use of alcohol, in such moderate quantities as are retained in small beer, and weak wines and cider, it may not be quite so easy to detect in the habits of a young man. And yet there are methods, of which you may lawfully avail yourself, which enable you to *guess*. Nor need you be very scrupulous about instituting an inquiry on the subject, when there is strong circumstantial or hearsay evidence in the case. He who is likely to be offended by such a course, is as unworthy of your hand as he is unfit for your friendship.

Slovenly habits, in regard to person and

dress, the keen eyes of young women will most certainly discover. I hardly need to dwell on this point, prone as you are to give this matter quite as much prominence as the nature of the case requires. Excuse me; I do not mean to charge you or your sex with an unnecessary fastidiousness on this subject; for I hardly know whether the charge could be sustained. All I mean to say is, that it is a thing to which the natural characteristics of your sex will insure sufficient attention.

And yet it may not be amiss to caution you against deception in one particular. Certain young men who make, or would be glad to make high pretensions to literature, having imbibed an idea which has been current time immemorial, that great minds are often greatly negligent on the subject of dress; and having found out your prevailing taste, will hope to ingratiate themselves into your esteem by mere slovenliness. Perhaps the caution is unnecessary to *you*; though to some of your sex it might be highly pertinent and useful.

Selfishness is nowhere more despicable than when, in order to deceive, it puts on the garb of benevolence. Here, most surely, the "livery of heaven is stolen for the basest of purposes. But this abominable theft is sometimes prac-

tised. . There is a class of men who add to their claims to literature in general, that of philanthropy ; and strive to convince you that their love for you and the rest of what they regard as the ignorant herd, is proportioned to their disregard of all conventional rules, especially those which pertain to personal appearance and dress.

In my Young Man's Guide, I have spoken with some freedom of slipshod women—not that I cared much about the thing, in itself considered, as about the character which usually accompanies it. Now, a slipshod character in man or woman, still seems to me contemptible ; and it is but fair that I should say so, even though it should convey no new idea to your own mind. It may do others good through your influence.

Straws, we are told, show which way the wind blows. Or in other words, little things afford an index to the character. A young man who wears his shoes negligently, will be so much the more apt to be negligent about business, other things being equal. I say other things being equal—because such a remark is indispensable. This, *other things being equal*, includes more than most people are aware.

I will even go a step further, and say that a

young man who manages not only his dress, but his ordinary business in a slipshod way, will be apt to manage the matter of friendship in a slipshod manner. Beware, therefore, in your selection, of one who may be slipshod for life!

Cowper, in his Task, has much to say of the habit of exercising cruelty, and takes for granted that it begins in cruelty to small animals. He says:—

“I would not enter on my list of friends,
Though grac'd with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility, the man,
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.”

Neither would I. Nor would I advise you to do so. Better have no friends, I had almost said, but God, than to have either part or lot with cruelty. A cruel young man will never make a delicate friend or a good husband.

Avoid a friend who frets much. He may not fret at you, it is true; and yet you can have no guarantee against such a result. Such things have been, and therefore may happen again.

But when I say this, I ought to explain my meaning. There are two kinds of fretters. The first may be compared to Etna or Vesu-

vius. He has an outburst occasionally—but when that is over, he may, for a time, be a pleasant companion, and even a valuable bosom friend. The other has no outbursts, but is always fretful; or at least he is never happy. He is always worrying, unless he sleeps; and sometimes even then.

This last is a very common characteristic of the people commonly called Yankees. Along with their many excellencies, they are greatly given to this species of fretfulness. It is too hot or too cold; too rainy or too dry; too clear or too cloudy—or what is about the same thing, it is *likely* to be so. Time, with them, goes too fast or too slow; they have too much business or too little; or though at present in circumstances of health and comfort, they are dismally apprehensive of poverty, disease or death. They are never happy; and they contrive to have no one around them happy.

Such a character, I would no more enter on my list of friends than Cowper's cruel man. Whatever may be your prepossessions in his favour, your hopes of restoring him to earth and heaven, you will find him absolutely, and I fear endlessly, irreclaimable. Be exhorted then, I again say, to avoid him, as you would the plague or the cholera.

You should also be on your guard against choosing for your friend one who does not love home. I grant, indeed, that much which is called love of home is merely instinctive. Still it is not to be despised. But there is a love of home which rises higher than all this. It is the love of home for the sake of the society—the intellectual and moral society—it affords; and the opportunities it affords of improving and elevating character.

I have seen young men who only valued home for the sake of its opportunities for self-indulgence and self-gratification. I refer not solely to indulgencies which would be deemed criminal; but rather to another kind, little less selfish, yet at the same time, nearly as much at war with connubial and conjugal happiness.

Some young men, for example, whose society might charm you, and who might prefer your society and your friendship till it ceased to possess the charm of novelty, will nevertheless, after the first moon or year, find the conversation of some beer-house or bar-room club more congenial to their feelings, and that ever raging desire, which prompts the inquiry—Who will show us any good? Or, as in Athens of old, they will give up the milder, steadier excite-

ments of home, to tell or hear at the club, or the corner, some new thing.

Surely I need not caution you to avoid a mimie, or droll, or buffoon. And yet I have known young women, with more than two-thirds as large a share of good sense as your own, most strangely deluded by such imps in the shape of men. I call them imps, for the want of a better name by which to express the contempt I feel for such detestable characters. They please, for a time, if they do not even dazzle by their brilliancy ; but they are soon—too soon, ala's, in most instances—found to be hollow-headed.

* Mirth is well ; but we should not be *all* mirth. Joking and punning may be well enough occasionally, but they soon pall. Laughing is better—though even this may be carried to an extreme. For to be all noise, and mirth, and fun, I say again, is to degrade ourselves. It lets us down too far for the sober realities of this life, and unsuits us for the more solemn realities of the life which is to come.

On one point I hope I shall not be misunderstood. Laugh and grow fat, is an old maxim ; but like a part of the category of ancient maxims, has meaning in it. Laughing, to a certain extent, is healthy. It is favorable

to our own health, and also to that of others. It would be particularly so to you, with your temperament. Since, however, you find it so difficult to laugh, yourself, it is of very great importance that your friends should laugh, especially your principal friend—the individual with whom, of all others, you are most intimate.

Seek a friend who possesses, among other traits of excellence, an abundance of good sound common sense. Our young men of these days have almost every kind of sense, but common sense.—This is a rare article. Wit, learning, a good temper, and many more qualities, of which I have not yet spoken, are valuable ; but when bereft of good, sound sense, they lose half their lustre.

Do not choose for your friend, one who is governed solely by his feelings. Feeling is blind—there must be a helmsman to direct. He who does not ask his judgment much oftener than blind feeling, what he shall do, has not yet learned all he might learn, nor qualified himself in the highest degree for usefulness. Or, if useful and happy now, he would be much more so, and much more valuable in the bonds of friendship, by making his head the helmsman.

There are thousands of young men, for example—and I fear almost as many young women as young men—who never ask their heads what they shall put in their stomachs. They go by custom, tradition, or habit—or by blind impulse or feeling. Worse, even, than all this; when they are told, by the head, what is wrong for them, they utterly disregard the warning voice.

Suppose they are sitting at a public table, and somebody offers them a doubtful dish, the head—the judgment—rejects it at once; and the reply is, "No; it does not agree with me." But others are using it; the sight and smell are so many tempters to transgress their own rules—the stomach is clamorous—and they yield to its demands, in spite of their first, best, and most sober judgment.

Now the individual, man or woman, who cannot gain the victory over blind impulse or feeling, on such occasions as this, is but poorly prepared for the duties of friendship. He that cannot deny his own appetite, will hardly be willing to risk the danger of exposing your faults. However much he loves you, he will hardly be willing to hazard any thing to make you better.

It is not self-denial, for the sake of self-do-

nial, that makes a person valuable in friendship, so much as for the sake of the other excellent traits which usually accompany it. A self-denying man is a man of energy, in all the circumstances in which he is placed. And nowhere is energy more necessary than in conjugal companionship and friendship. I could pity you in a thousand and one of the conditions to which conjugal life is liable; but I know not whether there are many in which I should pity you more, than in being bound to a man of slipshod character and habits.

When I began this letter, it was my intention to finish a topic which may, perhaps, ere now, have become tiresome. But I have not yet done. You will hear from me, at least once more, on the same subject.

LETTER XX.

PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS.

THE body and mind are so visibly and intimate connected, that it is almost in vain to look for high mental and moral qualifications of any sort in a feeble, miserable, and crazy frame work. Some of the phrenologists have carried this matter so far as to tell us, that as is the body, so is the mind and spirit; and that in all our attempts at improvement, either moral or intellectual, not an iota of progress can be made any farther, or faster, than we can improve the physical or material fabric.

But while I do not feel disposed to affirm quite so much as the phrenologists, I am fully prepared to take very high ground in this particular; and to assert, that all endeavours at mental and moral progress, must be liable to a good deal of abatement, while the body is so sadly forgotten or neglected as it usually is.

The old notion, that ill health and sickness are favourable to moral growth and elevation, was a much more fatal error than that of the phrenologists. For though God has most undoubtedly contrived to educe good from evil, and in certain cases, to make human suffering a means of humble advancement, it is only as an exception to his general rule. To affirm otherwise, is, practically, to impeach the wisdom of the Divine arrangement. But I have spoken of this before.

Other things, then, being equal, a healthy friend is far preferable to one who is sickly. He is more cheerful—and cheerfulness, as it stands opposed to discontent, and fretfulness, and moping melancholy, is a pearl of great price. His features are more prepossessing, not to say handsomer. For unsanctified sickness of every grade, like indulgence of the depressing passions, often knits the brow in frowns, and depresses the angles of the mouth, and converts externally an angel to a demon. It is peculiarly so with your sex—it is too frequently so with ours.

I exhort you, then, to avoid in the selection of a friend, one who is sickly. Nevertheless, if your lot should be cast, in spite of your best judgment and most strenuous efforts to prevent

it, with one who is a sufferer from ill health, you must summon to your aid at once all your philosophy, as well as all your Christianity. You must recollect, at least, the old vulgar couplet :

“ What can’t be cured,
Must be endured ; ”

and not only recollect it, but make the most of it.

You will say : “ But would you make much of mere beauty of form and feature ? ” My reply is, I would not have it overlooked. Mankind are prone to extremes, in this particular, as well as many others. Because too much has been made of beauty, therefore they resolve to make nothing at all of it, but practically to despise it.

And so it has been with several other things as well as beauty. Because some have sought, in matrimony for rank or fortune, it has been hastily concluded by many, in theory at least, that rank and fortune are to be despised.

Let me say, then, that while I might not go quite so far as to exalt beauty to a virtue, yet it is not to be despised, where every thing else is in harmony therewith. The pure in heart, —and such I humbly trust will be the charac-

ter of the great mass of mankind, some tens of thousands of years hence—should be as beautiful as pure.

And when cheerfulness of temper, and the sunshine of constant smiles, are the natural result of fine health, high mental cultivation, and a large share of moral excellence, and all other qualifications for friendship are such as you desire, it may be well for you to recollect the consequences to those around you, and to coming generations.

Young women are always reluctant to take this view of the subject. But wherefore? Is it not useful? You would certainly do what is right in this, as well as in every thing else. But the great and paramount obligation to live for others and for God, as well as for yourself, should not permit you to shuffle it off. It must be fairly looked at in the light of eternity, no less than that of physiology, or mere friendship.

There should not be too great a disparity in regard to age. Dr. Johnson, a British author, recommends the difference of nearly one whole septenniad. He regards the age of twenty-eight in our sex, and twenty-one or twenty-two in your own, as on the whole to be preferred. I think that seven years of difference are quite as many as are allowable by the laws

of physiology. Two or three are sometimes sufficient. What is wanted, in this respect, is just difference enough to secure a correspondence of taste, sentiment, &c., in those particulars, in regard to which age is ever changing us.

As to the question of early or late marriage, in the abstract, I have little to say, though much *might* be said. I will just quote from the same English author, to whose views I have already directed your attention by the preceding paragraph; and add a single comment. He says :

" In respect to early marriage, as far as it concerns the softer sex, I have to observe that for every year at which the hymeneal knot is tied before the age of twenty-one, there will be on an average, three years of premature decay of the corporeal fabric, and a considerable abbreviation of the usual range of human existence."

Thus, a young woman, according to Dr. J., who marries at fifteen—six years too early—loses her beauty, and becomes prematurely old eighteen years earlier for it; besides considerably shortening her life. And the same is true, in proportion, for every year at which marriage takes place under twenty-one. Should not

this view, though somewhat modified in its application to a new country, like the United States, have weight with all those who value life and happiness?

One thing I had almost forgotten. In selecting a companion and friend for the journey of life, it will be highly desirable to look carefully for all those excellencies and good habits, of which you are conscious of a deficiency in yourself. This will be the most certain means you could possibly secure for your own progress in all that is great, good, and goodlike; and hence, one of the greatest blessings which friendship can possibly bestow.

It may indeed happen, that you do not well understand what your own defects of character are. But so far as you do understand yourself, and indeed so far as light from any other source can come to your aid, in season or out of season, do not fail to make use of it, in the particular direction to which I now refer. A course of conduct this, which you will never regret while your life lasts—or while the existence of those who are dependent on you continues.

Need I dwell on this subject? Need I, in writing to a young woman of discretionary years, like yourself, go into particulars? And yet if it should not instruct, it may amuse you.

Amusement, you know, is sometimes as necessary as any thing else.

Thus, suppose you were given, much more than you are, to habitual melancholy. The greater this tendency, then, the greater the necessity that he whom you select as your constant companion, should be of the opposite character and tendency. I have spoken of the general benefits of habitual cheerfulness already—here, then, are some of its more particular benefits.

Suppose you are given to speculation—to dealing in mere abstractions. The world you occupy is an ideal world. High up in the air, your feet have no *terra firma*, any more than Noah's dove had. Now it is of immense importance, in such a case, that you have the constant society and counsels of one who *lives in this world*, much more than in Utopia.

You may want experience in the great school of human nature. You may have studied men and things as they *should* be, rather than as they are. Frequent disappointments, moreover, may have forced upon your own mind the melancholy conclusion that you are so. How necessary, then, in your friend, the counterbalancing qualification of a thorough ac-

quaintance with man as he is—with all his perversity and depravity.

Perhaps you are deficient in what the phrenologists call hope. I know indeed you are so. It is not so much a want of confidence, or even of hope in God, or in the ultimate triumphs of truth and holiness, as a kind of scepticism which pertains to truth and right here. You have hopes of a heaven beyond the skies; while you have neither hope nor expectation of much improvement in the condition of this world, either as regards the interests of mind or body.

Seek, then, the society of one who will not only "hope on, and hope ever," but will encourage you to do the same—one who not only has hope in a heaven above, but in one here below—one who believes, that eye hath not seen, ear heard, or heart conceived of the things which God hath reserved, even for *this* world, saying nothing of the superior glories of the world above. Such a friend would double and treble the joys of your existence.

LETTER XXI.

SEVEN RULES.

ON the subjects of Friendship and Marriage, as means of enabling you to fulfil your mission, I have dwelt so long, that I must now draw to a close. A few general rules for your conduct, are all that I will add. They will relate chiefly to traits of character, in which friends in conjugal life should agree.

1. In regard to the importance and value of home, as a means of mutual improvement and elevation—it is superior in this particular to every other school which life affords. Some indeed, among us, believe that we are not only benefited most—the great mass of us, when we are striving and labouring to benefit others; but the greater our sphere of activity,—the greater the number for whom we labour, pray, &c.—the greater, other things being equal, is our progress. Others, however, believe that the more we concentrate our influence—the fewer the persons for whom we la-

bour—the greater the aggregate of good done both to them and to ourselves. By extending our influence, they suppose we not only dilute, but weaken it.

Now, although it is not for me to settle so great a question, beyond the possibility of any farther debate, yet I am constrained to say, that of late years I have strongly inclined to the latter opinion. Hence it is, that I attach so much importance to the home school, and to home influences. But the rule I wish to lay down on this subject, is, that whatever may be the differing views of individuals in conjugal life, on this point there must be practical concession. You must not even do what in other circumstances is highly meritorious, that is, "*agree to differ;*" for you must absolutely *agree*.

Not indeed that you must act the part of the hypocrite, either of you, by seeming to believe what you do not and cannot. All I mean, is, that you must agree to act in the same general direction.* I will also add, that if you agree to place the same value on the family that I do, you will be great gainers by it in the end.*

* This idea does not at all conflict with the general opinion of a class, or of classes of public teachers, whose office it is to instruct large numbers. On the contrary, it confirms and strengthens it.

2. There must be entire agreement in regard to the necessity of having some general plan, both for your own conduct and the general regulation of your family. If one believes in a *plan* and the other does not, and no concession is made, either temporarily or permanently, is there not danger of perpetual collision?

This seems to me a matter of immense importance. You, for example, if I understand your views, correctly, desire to live by rule or system; while others think a systematic life, especially in the family, is mere slavery. Now, can two walk together, unless they are agreed in this matter? How can they? I should be almost ready to say, it were better to have no plan than to have one which fetters, embarrasses, or enslaves either party.

3. Closely connected with the preceding rule is another. There must be a similarity of views in regard to the general supervision and government of a family. Thus, if one of the heads of a family believes in a rigid discipline, and in the occasional infliction of corporal punishment, while the other believes that the same great ends can be secured by mildness and suasion; and if neither is ready to yield, is it not manifest that there must be such collision

as will jeopardise, if not absolutely destroy all family peace and happiness ?

It has been said, “ Whatever is best administered is best.” Now, I do not admit the truth of this maxim, merely because it is old ; but old or new, it has truth *in* it. And, for my own part, I should prefer almost any system of government, lax or severe, of fear or of love, to one in which the parties were at variance. Mere suasion, though I should dread its final issues, would not be so bad, as suasion on the one part, and martial discipline on the other.

4. Seek a friend whose religious opinions, in the main, resemble your own. I say this, however, not because *some* latitude of opinion is not admissible on this, as well as on all other subjects ; but because it usually turns out that in the intimacy of conjugal life, there will be enough of difference to secure a full and free discussion of all important topics, when the parties set out nearly together. Thinking people—and I trust you would never select for a companion in married life the *un-thinking*—who set out together in matters of opinion, in religion, politics, &c., are liable at best to

diverge greatly before they come to the end of life's journey.

5. An entire agreement is desirable, if not indispensable, in regard to many of the smaller things, so to call them, of human life. My attention has been repeatedly called to the customs of families in regard to early rising.— Small as the thing, in itself considered, may seem to be, it has a great deal to do with domestic peace and felicity.

I have seen families where one party wished to rise, always, at a certain hour, while the other wished to rise only at such an hour as blind feeling might dictate. But I never knew entire harmony in these families. There was always something wrong.

True, I have known the female head of the family submit to what seemed to her like the stern decree of the other party; but I never knew her to do it cheerfully; nor did I ever know the results to be favourable. Children are early and permanently injured by it, and that inevitably.

It oftener happens, however, that there is not so much as a temporary acquiescence in the strong demands of the other party. The husband, for example, will continue to rise early;

and the wife, with as much or more of pertinacity, will continue to rise late. And, as a consequence, there will be murmuring and complaining—crimination and recrimination. And as example is more effectual than precept, so the miseducation of the family prepares the next generation for the same unhappiness to which themselves are already subjected.

Now I am a strong friend to early rising.—They who rise early, and go about their customary employments with energy, seem to receive an impulse, in the consciousness of setting out right, that often lasts the whole day.—While they who rise late, often appear to get behind in their day's work, and to fret themselves in vain all day to overtake it.

And yet, I must honestly say that it can hardly be worse in its moral influence on the family, to have both parties, by mutual concurrence, lie late, than to wage a never ending war about it. Let this matter then, small as it may seem, be attended to, and in due season.

I would not indeed say to you, Never enter into the sacred bonds to which I allude, till you have found one for your friend whose habits are in harmony with your own; for if there is a general determination to do right, almost any change which is soon to be important can and

will be made. But I *do* say that it is highly *desirable* that the habits of the parties should be alike from the first.

6. So in regard to the matter of eating and drinking. It were desirable that the habits of two persons about to enter into the bonds of matrimonial friendship, should be as nearly alike as possible. For as it is with regard to differences of opinion on many subjects, so it is with regard to dietetic habits;—if you set out together, there is room enough to diverge before you get through life.

Still I have hope that no young woman possessed of but half the good sense which falls to your lot, would make herself or others miserable for the sake of insisting on having her own way. There must be concession, greater or less, in matrimony, on this and fifty other points, or happiness, if not friendship, is at an end.

7. In my remarks under our fifth rule, I have said, “If there is a determination to do right,” &c. Now it is of very great—I had almost said paramount—importance that we should not only hunger and thirst after truth and righteousness, but that we should also conform to the truth with the greatest promptitude, whenever it is known. Or, in other

words, there can be no true and Christian friendship in matrimonial life, unless the parties hold themselves bound to yield always to conviction.

You have read, in a work of the highest authority, " You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," or language of the same general import. Now I would not give much for that truth which does not make free ; nor for that bosom friendship under which the parties are not steadfastly determined to act according to their sober convictions of truth and duty.

Still less, if possible, would I give for that sort of friendship which, while it retains the *name*, has so lost the *spirit*, as to be unwilling to be corrected, or reminded of faults. This correction of each other's faults, let me say once for all, instead of passing them over from week to week, or from year to year—perhaps, what is still worse, apologizing for them—is one of the highest duties of friendship every where, especially in conjugal life. And they who have not learned to endure all this—nay more, to be thankful for the aid thus afforded them in the great work of self-progress and self-purification—are not yet fit for friendship's most exalted privileges and rewards.

LETTER XXII.

DISAPPOINTMENTS.

You see, from several letters I have written you, how much importance I attach to conjugal friendship. No other topic has occupied half the space which I have given to this. And I assure you I do not regret it.

I can think of but one objection which you will have against the course my remarks have thus taken ; and even that, on account of my age, and the general respect which you entertain for me, you will hardly dare to hazard. I will therefore make it for you.

You are not ignorant, wholly so, of human nature. You are not ignorant that it is woman's nature *to love*. You know, better than I do, that instinct and reason unite to render her confiding, dependent, and sympathetic ; and lead her mind and heart to friendship.— You also know that she is a great discerner of

character—that she often understands, by a kind of intuition, what it would take our own sex a long time to discover in other ways.—How, then, will you incline to ask,—how is it that I can hope to instruct and guide you in this matter?

Be it so, however, that I have taught you nothing new. Be it, that you have been looking, these many years, for just such a friend as I have described, but have been wholly unsuccessful in the search. Is it of no consequence to see your own judgment confirmed by one of an opposite sex? Is it nothing to have the testimony of others confirm the decisions of your own mind and conscience?

But I have taken up my pen this time to address you upon a subject somewhat different from any thing on which I have yet written—a subject upon which I may perhaps suggest a new train of thought to your mind.

Although you have hitherto failed to secure the sympathizing hand of connubial friendship, yet you have too much good sense to be discouraged. You will need all the blessings which love and sympathy and friendship can confer, as long as you live; and the longer you live, the greater will be the necessity.

Suppose, by the way, you are to be ad-

dressed by an individual who seems to be all that you could expect in this world. Faults he may indeed possess; but then you call to your mind, that for absolute perfection, here below, you are not to look. In a word, you perceive what you have never perceived before in the nature and character of the regard you have for him.

And as every thing was voluntary upon his part—no overtures or solicitations having ever been made, by you or your friends, directly or indirectly—you have reason, as you think, for believing your own sentiments and affections are reciprocated. You have reason to believe that Heaven will smile propitiously on your union for life.

Time passes on, and passes pleasantly. No positive engagement is made, for no outward or formal bonds seem necessary. Formalities would even seem to weaken what lies deeper than mere externals. In soul and spirit you are united already; not for time merely, but so to speak, for eternity.

Suddenly, however, and without the slightest known cause for a change of feeling, his visits are discontinued. You wonder why you hear no more the sound of his footsteps, nor receive any epistolatory explanation. Is he sick?—

Surely, were it so, you would hear of it. Is he absent? Why, then, were you not apprised of the intended journey? A still more important inquiry steals over your soul occasionally; but you thrust it from you. You cannot bear to harbour it for a moment. You meditate by day, and dream by night; but, alas! neither your day-dreams nor your night-visions are realized.

What you dare not believe to be possible, however, soon grows into a sober reality. He has, indeed, left you for ever. Not for any assignable reason, except one which would be last in the avowal, that his own feelings have changed. His only apology is, that he believes you are not adapted to each other, or that you are too good for him; but the real cause is that his own love has grown cold, and he views things through a very different medium.

In these circumstances, you will be involved in a trial more severe than your soul has ever yet dreamed of. And in the bitterness of your agony you will, at times, be ready to anathematize half the whole race of man. Or perhaps, with Job you will say, "Let the day perish wherein I was born." The agony will be extorted at first, from the fear that you have been grossly deceived. That smooth tongue,

you will say, never could have meant all it affirmed. You will be more astonished at what you suppose to be cool, calculating villainy, than at your own loss.

When, however, you find that there was less of villainy than of folly, though your indignation may subside, yet your anguish will increase. You have fastened your affections on an object, and cannot so easily disengage them ; whereas the object in question has only vacillated, like the needle from the pole. He loved you yesterday, to-day his love has disappeared. There may be no rival ; the fountains of what seemed to you a stream of permanent exhaustless friendship are completely dried up.

And now the agony is that you are alone ; and alone in a sense and with an emphasis of which you never before had any conception. Before you had a friend, you knew less his value ; but now that an ostensible friendship has awakened to activity and nurtured into growth the germs which God in his providence has planted deeply in female nature, you begin to feel what a wilderness this world is, when travelled alone.

You are now in a situation which requires all the aid of all the philosophy and religion you can possibly summon : It is a situation

which, though imaginary, of course, in the present instance, has been realized—alas, too often. It is a condition to which, in the present state of society, the mis-education of both sexes sometimes dooms your sex, and by means of which they sometimes sink into insignificance, if not imbecility.

God grant, my dear friend, that such trials as those I have here faintly portrayed, may never fall to your lot. Perhaps I do not hope wholly in vain. You are now quite beyond your "teens," and begin to be something more than a mere girl; I hope your heart will never, at this age, be trifled with.

But suppose the worst should happen—the worst, I mean, of what I have portrayed. You have indeed been ill treated, and the agent of this ill treatment deserves punishment. Still I do not advise you to indulge a vindictive spirit. It will do no good to yourself or to others.

It has sometimes been deemed advisable to institute a legal process, and punish the aggressor by taking away his money. But I have supposed a case, in which there is no ground for such a process; or at best none but that which is doubtful. Besides, every woman of

genuine delicacy will shrink from such a course, were it likely to be successful.

The truth is, the crime committed will bring with it a measure of punishment, whether you interfere or not. It may cause painful days and sleepless nights. Or, if otherwise—if there is not conscience enough to cause pangs—you may solace yourself in the full belief that your loss is not so great, after all, as you may, in the first moments of disappointed feeling—perhaps mortified pride—have supposed.

Indeed I can hardly conceive a sense of this kind in which a young woman is not a gainer, rather than a loser, would she but consider the matter rightly. For a young man who will thus vacillate, would make but a miserable friend. One disqualification seldom goes alone, especially a disqualification of this sort. In truth, you ought to congratulate yourself on your escape, rather than grieve on account of your supposed loss.

Do you say that the more you think on the subject the worse you feel—and that you cannot rise above it? I do not believe it. You are a woman of energy in other matters; surely you can bring your energies to bear on the present case. You have not hitherto sunk under your trials, why should you do so now?

You cannot rise above it! Indeed! but what then? What will you do? Will you sink under it? One of these results must follow. There is no medium—such is human nature. They that do not sustain themselves *must sink.*

You will say, perhaps, But how can I help it? I reply, Have you made the trial? And have you been thorough? Do not say you have no strength to do that which you have not yet attempted. Besides, she who does what she can in a trial of this kind, may look for aid to the completion of a work that proves too hard for mere human nature. When you have exhausted all the means afforded by earth and heaven, it may be time to talk about sinking.

Sink under your trials! Have you thought what this means, and how much it means? Can you bear the thought of becoming a mere block, a drivelling idiot, or a raving, infuriated maniac? Do you not shudder at the bare thought of the possibility, when you sink, as you call it, of having reason desert her throne, as Nebuchadnezzar's did—and of a condition much worse than his?

Do you say that your trials have thrown a gloom over every surrounding object; that the

face of nature is divested of its accustomed beauties ; that to you no sun shines, no flowers bloom, nor birds sing ; and that the very heavens gather blackness around your path, leaving creation not indeed a mere chaos, but worse than a chaos, a mighty blank ?

This indeed were a severe trial ; but worse trials have been endured. The mind has been awakened, ere now, to conscious guilt as well as suffering. Thank God, then, and take courage. Thank God, that though you suffer, you retain your innocence. Thank him that you are the injured—and not the one who has inflicted the blow.

You ask, it may be, what you are to do—a mere solitary—a mere cipher in society—uncared for, except by a few wretches who love to point at human misery to increase it—forsaken by man, and you fear, by God himself.

Not so fast. You are not so entirely forsaken as you suppose. There may be more of sympathy for you than you imagine. If it is quite true, that

“Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,”

it is not true that many of the human species are born to an end so undesirable. You were

born for a godlike purpose. I have in other letters pointed out, as well as I could, that purpose. Rouse, then, to the fulfilment of your mission. You have done much ; but there remains much for you to do.

True, you are as yet alone. You are a stranger and a pilgrim. But is not this, after all, the condition of humanity ? Are we not all strangers and pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth ?

In your lonely moments, when thinking of the condition of humanity, without friendships —when disposed to sink under the consideration that the world is but a wilderness of woe —you have, or *may* have, at least one consolation. There is a world to come, of which no one can deprive you, except your own sinful self, where friendship flourishes in eternal purity. Should you avail yourself of the privileges and joys, which that upper world professes you, will you not be repaid, a thousand-fold, for any sufferings, however great, which pertain to this probationary state ?

I said, however, your work was not yet done, even here. Would to God that young women were not so much inclined to feel as if there was nothing for them to do in the solitary state. Grant that the conjugal condition doubles

the efficiency of man or woman, and more than doubles it—what then? Are we not bound, still, to do all we can without it?

And is there an individual to be found among us who has done all the good she can, even in a restricted sphere, by kind actions, words, and looks, by the thousand and one forms, in which woman is able to become every where, not merely a missionary, but a guardian angel? They who say, with so much impatience, Alas! what good can I do? have not enough considered, as I fear, what doing good is.

In future letters I hope to show—whether the knowledge be of particular consequence to you or not—that what I have said in the last paragraph is something more than imaginary—and that guardian angels need not always be invisible. But I have one word, before I close, on another subject.

What I have to say relates to yourself. While you would not be injured yourself—sincere as you are in your search for friendship—do not for one moment allow yourself to injure others. Remember the golden rule of doing to them as you would that they should do to you.

I say this, not that I really believe you have the least disposition to act the coquette, but

because such a disposition is abroad among your sex, and because I am not quite certain you would be proof against its temptations. It is not only wrong, but it is mean.

What though it is common and fashionable ? What though it is gratifying to vanity ? Are you, therefore, justified in using it ? Not by any means. Beware, therefore. Avoid even the first steps in the road that leads to it.

LETTER XXIII.

DOING GOOD.

"Who will show us any good?" One of the best discourses I have ever heard was founded on this text. It took for granted what every reflecting person already knows, that all mankind are seeking for happiness, in some way or other; but that the far greater part seek it in the wrong way. That instead of seeking to become holy, as a means of being happy, they grasp directly at happiness, and therefore generally miss it.

Holiness of person and character, by leading us to do good—to bring forth much fruit, as the saviour expresses it—is what is most needed among us. Let those, then, who would find true and lasting good, seek to be holy, and to *do* good. In any event, let those who *seek* good, fully understand that the shortest way to obtain it, is by *doing*.

You may do good, I know, as a mere passion or pastime; though this is not usual. Besides, who would not greatly prefer that the

world should be made better in this way, than in no way at all? Would that doing good were a pastime with every body!

Franklin appears to have had such a passion for doing good, as made it with him, almost a recreation. He caught the spirit of it from reading Dr. Cotton Mather's "Essays to do Good;" a capital work, which, by the way, I wish you would peruse carefully, if you have not already done it.

Of course, it is not for me to say that Franklin was not moved to this work by Divine influences, or rather by the love of holiness for its own sake, though it is not generally so considered. But be this as it may have been, he appears to have been fond of the work, and to have been quite at home in it.

One of the best practical books on this subject is a work by Rev. Jacob Abbott, entitled, "The Way to do Good." Had this excellent man never written any other work, he would have been a public benefactor. Read this, also; your fondness for his other works is such that I trust you will need no urging, in this particular.

Another work, by the Rev. Pharellus Church, entitled "The Philosophy of Benevolence;" and another, still, by Dr. Dick, on

"Covetousness," are worthy of your attention. You can hardly fill your soul too full of this great subject. It is high as the heavens, what canst thou do?

In regard to all the books I have seen on doing good, except the Bible, there is one capital defect. Mr. Abbot's is, however, the least exceptionable. They teach us the importance of doing good plainly enough, and urge the subject upon us strongly enough; but they leave almost untouched the science of it. The science of Philanthropy *as a science*, is, as yet, a desideratum.

I wish I had time and room to enter at once upon this great subject. Indeed, I am not without the hope, that in my next two or three letters—should I live to write them—I may make a beginning. But this will be about all. Meanwhile, I must be permitted to finish this communication by a few more very general remarks.

Some have been disgusted with those who called themselves doers of good, because there was mingled, in their efforts, more or less of display, or what the Phrenologists call love of approbation. Thus, I have seen a man who made loud and large pretensions, who wore gold spectacles, and who seemed to take special

Now, while I am fully conscious that doers of good, in every form, should avoid even the appearance of evil, I am not quite sure that we ought not to expect a spice of vanity, if nothing worse, in what they do ; or even a few of the swellings of pride. The approbation of others, moreover—when we cannot aim any higher—is not to be wholly despised. Still, as fast as we can, we ought to learn to do the good we do, for the pleasure of it, and for the benefits it confers on others, and even ourselves ; or what is a higher motive still, for the desire of pleasing God, our heavenly Father.

I wish to say again, (see Letter XII.) that one great blessedness of doing good, consists in the fact that, after all the good it does to others, it blesses the individual who does it, much more, as a general rule, than any body else. The great Gospel principle, “ It is more blessed to give than to receive,” has for ages been admitted—indeed, who, in any age, ever disputed it?—but how seldom has it been practically acted upon, and carried into daily life ! One reason for this is, that it has not been understood, in its nature.

For how is it that doing good operates to make us better while we do it ? Dr. Dwight says, “ Doing good produces love ;” and again,

"We love those to whom we do good, more than we love those who do good to us." Here, as it seems to me; is the true answer to an inquiry. Doing good creates love towards the object for whom we labour. And hence the more good we do, the more we love. And the more we love, the more our hearts are made better.

In truth, it has often occurred to me that doing good is the cause or source of a much greater proportion of the love—instinctive love always excepted—which we have for our fellow creatures, than most people are aware. Parental love, and even conjugal love, if they do not originate in this way, are most certainly greatly increased by it.

Have you not seen, for example, a doting parent, most fond of some bed-ridden or consumptive or idiotic child, for whom he has done almost as much as for all the rest of his family? And how will you account for it so well as on this great principle?

This is not—I repeat—to deny the force of instinctive or impulsive love, nor to say that even this sort of love is not increased in the same way as the other—at least to some extent. Nor do I say that it is not blessed to receive good as well as to communicate it. All

I contend for is, that it is *more* blessed to give than to receive, and that facts prove it.

Mankind seem, indeed, to suppose that all, or nearly all, of blessedness in this world—and still more in the world to come—consists in receiving good, rather than in doing it. At least they practice as if they thought so. I know, as I have already admitted, that they profess to believe in the Christian doctrines of benevolence in theory; and this will account for the fact, that their theory and practice are perpetually at war; and that they miss half the happiness they might otherwise secure and enjoy..

You, my friend, are still young. You have not seen quite half the years sometimes allotted to our race. You have the world, as it were, before you. The great doctrine, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is therefore a matter of everlasting importance to you. It is of importance to me, old as I am—but it is still more so to you.

Not that life would not be worth possessing, were the order of things reversed, and were the greater part of your blessedness to have its origin in the receipt of good, instead of its communication. Still you would have far less of motive to action in that case, as a female than you now have.

When a young woman, whose eyes are beginning to be opened to the condition of this world, and especially to the world within, (and she begins to feel as if, in view of so much to be done for herself and for others, she could do nothing,) first gets a glimpse of the practical effects of true benevolence—that charity which, as Shakspeare says, is twice blessed—she seems to be introduced, as it were, to a new world. Instead of sitting all the day idle, or mourning over her secluded condition, she goes to work.

And the more she does, the more she finds to do. Had she a hundred hands, and half as many heads, she would soon find ample employment for them all. Nay, instead of feeling as if she had little to do but to drag out the remnant of a short life *somewhat*, she will almost wish she had a dozen lives of a thousand years each.

A thousand years of life ! Why, what is that, as a season for doing good ? And yet we may begin the work in a much shorter period. We may begin it, in a very few years. Indeed, is it not the great business of this life to prepare to do good ?

I know well, that some people regard the future state as a passive condition—a quiescent

state. At most they intend to expend it in acts of what are usually called worship. But is it so? That such worship will be included, there may be no doubt; but is it not the Divine plan, that if we have happiness we must work for it, and work hard too?

What is the whole gospel plan of salvation but to rescue us from folly and selfishness, and their natural and necessary consequences, and to place us in a condition where we may be eternally benevolent—where, like cherub and seraph, we may fly with everlasting speed, in our efforts to spread blessedness and be blessed?

Go forward, then, my dear sister, in the sublime work of co-operating with the Creator and Redeemer of human souls, in spreading everlasting blessedness as fast and as far as possible. Do not delay one moment. If much of your life has run to waste already, see that no more of it does so. They have their work half done who have it well begun. See that you begin it immediately.

Do not labour for pay. Reward will come, it will be in the form of an increased capacity to be useful. Expect to work, and work, and work on, while immortality endures; and rejoice that in this way you may rise, in due time, where neither cherub nor seraph has yet soared.

LETTER XXIV.

PULLING OUT OF THE FIRE.

WE now come to methods—ways and means, rather—of doing the good we may meditate. And in pursuance of our subject, let us consider, first, a species of angelic work which the Scripture characterises by the phrase, “pulling them out of the fire”—the fire, of course, which is enkindled by vice and immorality.

I knew a female not long since, in one of our populous eastern towns, who, though far enough from affluence, and at the head of a large family, contrived to spend a portion of almost every day in plucking souls and bodies from the fires of lust, appetite, and passion, especially the former.

Say not that you are situated in a community where little is to be done in this way; for I grant it in the outset. Nevertheless, I may succeed, before I close, in showing you,

PULLING OUT OF THE FIRE.

that you have no occasion to be idle, even in this part of the Master's vineyard.

The woman I have mentioned above would go *in pursuit* of good to be done. Now you may find work of this kind to do if you stay at home, or you may not. But she, I say again, went in pursuit of it. And so did the great Example of doing good. He did not remain at home, though he had one so excellent. He descended from the skies "to wretched man."

I have sometimes wished our churches would make it a business to employ one or more missionaries of this kind—lay missionaries I might call them—and set them to doing just such work as our Saviour would do in the same circumstances. It would be of incalculable value to them as a means of saving both souls and bodies.

But you need not wait for any appointment of this sort. You have a commission from the great Head of the Church already, as every woman has. If you know of any who are miserable, or in daily and hourly danger of becoming so, within your reach, you can visit and do something for them. At least you can make the attempt, and that is worth something.

It may be well for you, before you set out, to read the latter part of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. Observe, while you read it, that though you are not to be rewarded for your works, yet the award is to be in a proportion to their magnitude. Your reward is *according* to your works; and so is that of every other disciple.

Observe, moreover, what it is which constitutes a disciple. It is not saying Lord, Lord. It is not holding an orthodox creed. It is not belonging to an orthodox church. All this may indeed be well; but it goes for nothing alone. There is hunger to be appeased—of body or soul. There is thirst to be allayed. There are strangers to be taken in, or in some way aided. There are bodies or souls, or both of them, to be clothed. There may also be the sick or the prisoner to relieve.

How is it possible for an individual, who reads the chapter, and believes it to be the word of God, to feel as if there was nothing for her to do? But I forget that I am talking to you just now, of a particular kind of doing good, which I have called pulling out of the fire.

Are there, then, no public houses, within half a dozen or a dozen miles of your dwelling, where vice is daily and hourly putting forth, or

at least germinating? Are there no milliner's shops, bonnet factories, or other places where large numbers of persons are assembled, especially of your own sex? Are there no haunts of vice to which you can gain access, by person, by letter, or by proxy?

Need I say to you, who have seen something of the world and read of much more, that a vast deal of good may be done, at almost any of those places? It would be needful to some young women, however, for me to say that it ought to be done in a proper manner. In this world, much depends on the manner in which we do things, especially things of the kind now referred to.

Some of the individuals to whom you would do good, though gradually becoming abandoned, may not have lost all self-respect. They must therefore be met, and treated accordingly. For if, on the contrary, you criminate them at the outset, and above all, in the company of others, you will be almost certain to defeat your own purpose.

Indeed, one reason why so many young women, at "places" and in factories, become shameless, is because they first lose their self-respect. They then begin to think no one else cares for them; and hence their progress is easy

to a condition in which they care for nobody, or for themselves either.

Now there is often a period, in the history of all such young women, when, notwithstanding their great want of self-restraint and self-government, and the ill effects of a most perverted education, a word of sympathy from some individual whom they respect, might save them from sinking. How much is it not worth to be the honored instrument of saving a fellow-creature at such a crisis !

A young man, whom I knew in Virginia, having been the instrument of saving a drowning companion at Williamsburg, was in the almost daily habit of relating the story, to every friend he met with, for a long time. It was a great thing to him. And who would undervalue such a deed ? But how much more important is it, to save a soul from sinking in a worse gulf than the bed of James river ?

I am fully persuaded that if you keep your eyes open, as you pass through the world, you will have many an opportunity to pull from the fire beings made in the image of God, but sadly misled either by their own sex or ours, or both. And remember still, that she who converteth a sinner from the error of her ways, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.

Young women are apt to be timid, in relation to this matter. They are fearful about their own good name. They will, perhaps, point us to Mc Dowell, and tell us gravely, that if that eminent man of God, pure as he was, could not rise above reproach, there is surely but little hope that young women like themselves can.

But have you not read of the boldness of our Saviour in in this particular? Did he refuse to hold converse, though a Jew, with the woman at the well of Samaria? Or what may seem to you to be more to the point, have you not read the life of Margaret Prior, of New York? And have you not heard of Mrs. McFarlin, of New Bedford? These persons have gone through years—and one of them through life—unscathed and unhurt. Besides, times have altered since the days of McDowell. You fear personal abuse, it may be, and even violence. But I do not think it need be so. Females generally pursue their errand by daylight, when rogues are apt to be cowardly. Besides, there is not one man in a thousand who will have the hardihood to insult an honest straight-forward missionary, of any age or of either sex.

In truth, there is something in the combination of female boldness and innocence, that

tends to disarm almost any man of guilty purposes, the seducer himself not excepted. This truth has been abundantly attested in every period of the world's history.

Suppose, however, you should suffer. Suppose you should even die. Would not the old proverb be verified in your case—that “the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church?” Would not the cause of truth receive a mighty impulse from such a sacrifice?

LETTER XXV.

PULLING OUT OF THE FIRE.

THERE are many ways in which you may be, directly or indirectly, instrumental in plucking brands from the burning ; or as I have called it, in my last letter, pulling souls and bodies out of the fire. For there are several ways, in which, to use the strong language of inspiration, we may be set on fire. Half mankind are exposed to destruction, ere they reach life's quiet autumnal evenings and fireside reflections.

It may be thought useless to dwell on the means and measures of plucking from the fires of alcohol ; because the subject has been long before the public. Besides; what has a young woman to do, you will naturally ask, with reclaiming the intemperate ?

I will tell you of some things which may be done by women, whether young or old ; as well as of certain other things which young women may do, better than their seniors.

Women, young or old, may search for families who are in want, on account of intemperance in one or both their heads ; and having ascertained their real wants, they may go to the authors of those wants, and ask them to supply them.

Thus, suppose you know of an intemperate family in the township where you reside. You pay them a visit. The father is not at home. His wife and children are all there, clad indeed, but with rags ; and fed, but very scantily. The school-house is near by, but the children do not attend ; the church is not far off, but they are never at the Sabbath school. The plea is, they have nothing decent to wear.

You inquire for the father ; but all you can learn is that the times are hard, and he cannot get work. On inquiry elsewhere, you learn that he divides his time between the tavern and a couple of stores, one of which, as you verily believe, is as much at fault, or nearly as much, as the tavern.

Now, what will you do ? You have not money to furnish clothing for the family. Besides, what permanent good would it do ? You cannot hope to do much good by reasoning with the intemperate themselves. Go then,

with boldness, yet with kindness, and lay the case of the distressed family before those who furnish the liquor which causes their distress, and tell them they are the authors of their miseries. Go to them as privately as possible, however; having with you a single friend only, as an evidence as well as a safeguard.

But you need not fear. The moment you tell them what they ought to do, conscience, if they have any, will be on your side; and they will seldom refuse your request. They will give you something to get rid of you. In certain cases, which I am not at liberty to mention, keepers of public houses, who were almost without consciences, have given liberally, especially at the request of woman.

I know of nothing more likely to move the hearts of those individuals who scatter fire-brands and death in the community, and lead them to pause in their mad career, than the tears and entreaties of a female missionary.—She need not reproach them with intentional wrong-doing; she may simply state facts. The distressed family is out of wood,—shoes,—clothing,—or bread. State their necessity in strong terms, and the cause of it; and though the individual whom you address may deny that he has any participation in the crime, he

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will, as I have already said, put his hand in his pocket.

When you plead the necessity of education, moral and intellectual, and ask for the means of sending the children to school, your case will be more trying. But even in this particular you cannot, if importunate, fail to be successful. Though they may not give you because they care for you, or those whom they have made miserable, yet because of your importunity, sometimes they will have pity on their children.

All this, I say, you may be, and much more, whatever may be your condition in life, and whether you have any other than an Almighty arm to lean upon, or not. The righteous, says Solomon, are as bold as a lion. They have at least a friend in the heavens. But there are some things which you can better do, in the capacity of a young woman, than if you were in conjugal life.

No young man becomes grossly intemperate in a moment. He usually falls by little and little. The drunken father of a family was once a temperate young man. He may have been fond of excitement—unnatural excitement, I mean;—no doubt he was so. Plain water and plain food were doubtless insipid to

him, He was fond of high-seasoned food, and of hot and *high-seasoned* drinks. He was fond of hot tea and strong coffee ; of beer and champaigne, and of the pipe and the cigar.—From these, in the aggregate—nay, from any two of them—the transition was easy to the love of rum and brandy ; and from the occasional use of them, in moderation only, if such a thing there is, the transition was easy to immoderate drinking and habitual excess.

Now the female companion of every drunken husband has probably received the visits, during her lifetime, of one or more young men who were on the high road to drunkenness. They used some of the unnatural excitants above mentioned, and were more or less enslaved to them ; and she probably knew it. True, she may not have been taught concerning the connection between them ; but this, though it does not lessen her misfortune, extenuates her fault.

Instead then of going abroad to pluck from the burning, you may often do your work quite as effectually at home, or in the circle of your particular friends. For in all these circles, or at least in most of them, you will meet with more or fewer young men.

I have said that you may perform your mis-

sionary work as effectually at home as abroad. This statement is not strong enough. If the old maxim is true that prevention is better than cure, and if young men, in general, are liable to become diseased, then you can work more effectually in a home sphere, than in a more public one.

Your sex do not seem to be at all aware of the immense influence they might exert in the cause of temperance, if they would but set their faces as a flint against all the habits which lead to it.

And why will they not do it? Why will not every young woman make manifest to every young man, unless he is an entire stranger, her disapprobation of the use of tobacco and other excitants, such as those I mentioned above? And, if necessary, after repeated gentle admonitions, why should she not refuse to remain in his society?

One might think no woman of delicacy, young or old, would need cautioning on this subject. How can she endure the sight of teeth and gums besmeared and discoloured with tobacco juice? How can she bear to inhale the fumes of this poisonous weed, lodged in the clothes of the individual, or it may be issuing from his saturated system through the lungs?

How can she endure the smell of alcoholic liquors, after they have passed all over the body, and are being driven out through the air cells of the lungs and the pores of the skin? How can woman, with her purer blood, put up with the bloated frame and reddened eyes induced by coffee, champaigne, and other alcoholic or poisonous liquors?

There is one answer to these queries, which I wish the truth did not permit me to make. Not that the remark will apply to you, for I know better; but it will apply to many of your sex. Pure as their blood and breath are, they are both far less pure than they might be, and would be, if they did not use any poisonous or medicated substances themselves.

And herein, my dear friend, is, I fear, the true reason why young women are so inefficient in the cause of temperance; they are not quite temperate themselves. They cannot live—or fancy they cannot—without extra stimulants, at least a little tea or coffee. No wonder, then, they do not refuse the company of those who are only a little more intemperate, and a little more disgustingly filthy in their habits than themselves.

Let young women, then, who would do all in their power to promote the cause of temper-

ance, not only by pulling out of the fire, but by preventing their fellow-creatures from falling into it, gird themselves anew by a more consistent and more perfect example. Let their light so shine that they and their companions, friends, and associates, of both sexes, may be led to glorify their Father who is in Heaven. Let them touch not the unclean or poisonous thing, and let them, by their example, dissuade all others from it, that they may become the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

LETTER XXVI.

ASSOCIATED EFFORT.

I HAVE hitherto spoken of the good you may do alone. I have indeed given you directions, in regard to friendship and the qualifications of friendship; but in all, or nearly all I have said on that subject, I have continually been thinking of your own usefulness, and not of any direct aid you were to receive, or might hope to receive from others.

But I must go a little further now; no so much to speak of what you can do as a wife, a mother, and a housekeeper—for of your duties in these various relations I have treated elsewhere pretty freely*—as to say something of the numerous associations of the present day, into whose ranks—some of them—you will be likely to fall.

* See the "Young Wife," the "Young Mother," the "Young Housekeepers," published by Messrs. Strong and Broadhead, Boston.

For the friends of the Maternal Association will expect you to join them. Of the Sewing Circle, you must, of course, be a member. The Moral Reform Society will expect you to be one of their members. The Female Society for promoting Education in the West, will put in its claims. Then you are also expected to be a member of the Peace Society, the Temperance Society, the Tract Society, the Bible Society, the Foreign Mission Society, the Anti-Slavery Society, and perchance the Sabbath School Society, and the Society for the Ameliorating the condition of the Jews.

Here, surely, you have an opportunity to do something in a missionary capacity; for not only do these various associations have their agents, but in many instances they are, by virtue of their constitution, or the nature of the case, agents themselves.

Thus, suppose you are a member of the Sewing Circle. Not only do you give of your substance—money, or clothing, or books—to some charitable purpose, but you are expected to meet with your associates occasionally, and spend an afternoon, or a longer period, in labouring in behalf of the same charitable object.

Or suppose you have united with the Moral Reform Society. We have seen, in previous

letters, what can be done by somebody, in the way of "pulling out of the fire ;" and nobody can do such work more efficiently than the members of this society. Few persons in any age, have been more truly missionaries than Margaret Prior.

But there is a work to do, in this direction, to which I have, as yet scarcely adverted ; but which none I am sure can better do than young women. Society is full, as it were, of the sources of impurity. They are found, too often, where we should little expect them, and in such shapes that we scarcely perceive their real, legitimate tendency.

Your situation I am well aware is, in this respect, peculiarly favourable. Still you will frequently come in contact with these fountains of pollution. There will be the innuendo ;^{*} the vulgar remark ; the double-entendre ; or at least there will be the amorous look or action. There will be perhaps some effort on the part of somebody, in your presence, to blunt the keen edge of female sensibility, or loosen the reins of woman's natural modesty.

Now, whether the attack is made on you, or on some other person, I hope you will repel it

* See "Walks of Usefulness," published by the American Moral Reform Society in New-York.

in a becoming spirit and manner. It is even more necessary that you should act in this case when the abuse is directed to another person, than when it is directed to yourself. For while in the latter case, you may reasonably enough be silent, in the former you are bound to step forth as the defender of female purity and innocence ; especially when the persons likely to sustain injury are much younger than yourself.

I have said, in a former letter that we usually fall little by little. It is so with woman, as well as with man. Shun then, as you would the pestilence, the incipient stage of seduction, by shunning the individual who is the cause of it. In this way, and in other ways, can you do more for the cause of reform and moral purity—very much more—than in any other. The reason is, that this important field of missionary labour—though white for the harvest—is generally overlooked.

You are a member, as I happen to know, of a Temperance Society ; and have pledged yourself to the disuse of all intoxicating liquors. Very well. But is there nothing more for you, as a female missionary, to do ? What is your example in regard to the use of small beer, tea, coffee, &c. ?

Or if your example is faultless, do you rest

there, and suppose your work all done? Or do you carry the war into the enemy's territory? Or do you refuse to mingle in society, on convivial and other occasions, where the thousand and one streams of intemperance are slowly fed?

But I will not dwell on this topic, for I have said enough elsewhere. Besides, you know how this matter stands, and in this respect at least need not counsel. Happy are they who know the will of God and do it.

I might speak of the many ways of acting out the missionary, as a member of a Peace-Society, or as a signer of the league of Brotherhood. And so of your duties in relation to the missionary enterprises of the day, and the organizations and efforts for the abolition of slavery. But I must close this letter soon, and have therefore no room for the present.

Remember, however, one general rule. It is that you do much good, when you only prevent the commission of evil. To illustrate. Suppose you are in the Sewing Circle. The conversation runs into detraction or slander. Or you discover its tendency, perhaps, sufficiently early to check it. Now, in preventing a current of slander, do you not indirectly aid the cause of

justice, truth, and righteousness? Most certainly you do.

In like manner, whenever the conversation takes a course which is likely to tend towards the indulgence of those feelings, or those passions, or habits, which favour vice in any of its forms, you may often do much good, either by silence, or by kind and gentle rebuke. Of oftener still, by turning the current into another channel.

And hence the blessedness of those associations, which some affect to despise—especially to woman. Even at the head of a large family, woman is often isolated. At least she comes short of all the good she might accomplish. I like, therefore, the Maternal Association—the Sewing Circle—the Moral Reform Society, &c. And yet I shall speak in my next of an association, which, if it did its perfect work, might almost be a substitute for many to which I have in this long communication alluded.

LETTER XXVII.

CHURCH AND SABBATH SCHOOL.

YOUR love and zeal for the Sabbath School have long been manifest. In this respect, at least, you have suited the action to the word; as Shakspeare says.

And well you may do it. The Sabbath is one of those institutions which have not only grown out of the prevalence of the Gospel spirit, but which mark its progress. They prove to the world, beyond the possibility of debate, that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

You, I doubt not, have verified the truth of this maxim in the growth of piety in your own soul, as the consequence of your labors with Sabbath School children. You have found that they who water others shall themselves be watered.

The Sabbath School is a part of the church

It is not, strictly speaking, a separate organization. In binding yourself, therefore, as a church member, you net only bind yourself to the church, as a body of adults, but to the whole mass of families represented by the members of that church.

I regard the church of Christ as a company of penitent sinners, collected together, in the providence, and by the appointment of God, for promoting their own spiritual growth, and for extending the same spirituality to others. They are a collection of Pauls—only, it may be with less of intellectual cultivation. They have not at all sat at the feet of Gamaliel.

And yet I never make this concession without many misgivings ; for we are quite ready enough, without it, to apologize for our own neglect of duty. The truth is, I do not know that it is beyond the power of any individual of our times, who is endowed with an average share of good sense and intelligence, to do as much as Paul did, excepting always and of course what he did under the influence of inspiration.

But if not, the church ought to understand the matter in this light. If with the knowledge and multiplied facilities of modern times, every individual Christian is not only as truly

a divinely appointed missionary as Paul was, except to write epistles and work miracles, (and is there any one who will deny this doctrine?) then we ought so to understand it; and to feel, as truly as he did, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel."

You ought, my dear friend, to feel thus. And if, as the result, you should feel as Paul did, that it is your duty to make proclamation of the Gospel, in all the countries of the known world, I do not know that I should have either the right or the disposition to complain. The truth is, I wonder that every church member, not even forty years of age—male or female—does not feel thus.

True it is that if, in the ardour of your first conviction and first love, you should feel disposed to become a public proclaimer or ~~crier~~ of the Gospel—if, like Frances Wright Darusmont, you should be disposed to mount the rostrum—I might endeavour to argue the point with you, whether your zeal had not led you in a wrong direction.

I might endeavour to show you the importance and necessity of beginning your work at "Jerusalem." I might endeavour to show you that all the signs of the times unite to indicate that the family and the church ought first to

be converted to God, and duly sanctified; and that here, in this great work, we need not merely a Paul but a host of Pauls; and if angel, cherub, or seraph have any thing to do with the Christian scheme, a host of Gabriels and Michaels and Raphaels.

I might beseech you—and I do now make the earnest entreaty—to remember that the most important as well as most difficult missionary field of modern times, is the home missionary field;—I mean now the family and the church, with their several appendages—the public or common school, and the Sabbath school. I might prove, or at least attempt to prove, that to be a missionary, such a missionary as Paul was, is not only a work of paramount importance, but one which involves of necessity as great self-denial as any known missionary duty whatever.

The Sabbath school, indeed, is not all you have to do with; for, as I have just now intimated, the public or common school bears about the same relation to the family which the Sabbath school does to the church. And as surely as the world is yet to be converted to Christianity—such a Christianity as is worthy of the name—just so surely it is true, that, on

all these, we must labour to write Holiness to the Lord.

Every child, within what might be called the pale of every Christian church, must be properly and religiously educated. To this the church is bound collectively. But what the church is, collectively, bound to do, must be done by the members of the church. They *are*, in fact, the church.

Now then, I trust, you will go to your Sabbath school class, not only on the Sabbath, but at your visits on week day, as a missionary of the cross of Christ. You will go to them with the same spirit and zeal which Paul would manifest; or higher still, you will go to them with the spirit and zeal and love with which the teachings of the Saviour would be invested in the same circumstances.

One thing, in particular, I beg you to remember. It is your involuntary influence, as a missionary. Your voluntary or willing influence—all that makes a faithful and energetic Sabbath school teacher *in* the Sabbath school—you will be apt enough to think of. But what your influence shall be the rest of the time—when, though the sharp eyes of the pupils are upon you, you think not much about it, and are apt to teach the maxims and incul-

cate the spirit of the world rather than that of Christ—you are not so careful to consider. Yet it is this last which teaches, impresses, educates, forms the character—for time and for eternity—more, much more, than all the willing, voluntary influence you exert.

LETTER XXVIII.

TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND MERCY.

THERE is such a general laxity in the public morals of all countries, that to single out any particular country as sinning above the rest—especially our own goodly New England—might seem invidious ; indeed I am not disposed to do so. And yet to whom much is given of the same shall much be required. If New England, with all her privileges, and with the full blaze of gospel light which is shed upon her, is lax in her morals, surely she needs to be cautioned.

You, then, as one of the daughters of New England, may very fairly be addressed on the subject. There are many vices and errors of the times which demand our attention ; but I propose to direct your attention, just now, to but two or three.

And, first, the general disregard of *truth* which prevails ; and not only prevails, but increases. It is not among the vicious of society

alone that truth is disregarded ; but it is even among our best families. It is among those who would be, and should be, patterns in all moral and religious excellence.

In saying this, however, I do not intend to affirm that there is not as much truth told, in the aggregate, as ever there was. Indeed I have not a doubt that truth, as well as falsehood, is on the increase. But whether truth increases as fast as falsehood is quite another question.

For who does not know that with the increase of civilization and the arts—along with the multiplication of labour-saving machinery—comes means and facilities of communication, by tongue and pen both—aye, in every form ? In other words, the greater the mental activity of society, the more we talk and write, the more, in the same proportion, do we hear, either of truth or falsehood.

And now comes the difficulty. The more we talk, the greater the temptation to talk wrong—to dissemble, conceal, misrepresent, equivocate, and actually falsify. David said, “ all men are liars,” but he said, it, as he acknowledges, in haste. A hasty man might say so now. All seem inclined to lie ; and certain it is, that what is said by most people must be received

with much allowance for that discolouration to which self interest, in its various aspects, might lead.

Even the various parties and sects into which society is broken up—even those—Incline to the same fault, in this respect, of which their various members are often guilty! How could it be otherwise? In truth, men seem privileged to lie in politics. The more they can misrepresent, with a show of truth, the greater they seem to think their prospect of success.

But when, as members of religious sects, men or women come to play the same game, it is, in its results, dreadful. I do not say that sectarianism is always reduced to a mere game; but it certainly sometimes is. And the consequences, when it is done, can never be too much deplored.

Set yourself, Oh set yourself, in all your ways, words, and actions—at home and abroad—in life and in death—against every form of untruth. Be on your guard, especially in what are usually regarded as small matters. Here, if nowhere else, be the faithful missionary. At least, be a faithful missionary for truth in your own family and among your own acquaintance.

Another thing society is greatly given to is

fraud, in its ten thousand shapes and forms—not excepting what are termed pious frauds, Here, too, great care is demanded, of females especially. Nor will the evil in question be removed, wholly, till females do, in earnest, set themselves about it.

I will even hazard the assertion, that neither fraud nor falsehood will greatly diminish among us till the female world—I mean the female Christian world—set the example of diminishing it. Men will defraud and deceive, individually and socially, as long as women connive at it; nay, even till they boldly rebuke it. No young woman should associate long with a man who persists in being fraudulent.

One thing more; and that is *mercy*. It is often said that cruelty is the natural associate—the child rather—of idolatry. But in removing idolatry from among us—if indeed we have done more as yet than to change the *form*—we have not, as it appears, removed every form and vestige of cruelty. The *germs* of cruelty, to say nothing more, every where appear—well for us, if we do not have the fruits. In truth, how could it be otherwise?

For whence come war and murder, which still linger on our borders, nay, in our very midst? Has not James told us the whole

story eighteen hundred years ago? Did wars and fightings on a *large* scale have their origin, at that time, in small beginnings—in pampered lusts and appetites—and have these latter nothing to do, in the way of bringing about such results at the present time?

You may depend upon it, that as certainly as human nature *is* human nature, and as human nature is the same now in all its essential features, that it was thousands of years ago, all the larger cruelties of mankind have their origin in the cruelties of infancy and youth.

And over those cruelties, especially those of the cradle and play-ground, your own sex, as sisters, daughters or mothers, have very large control. Or if you cannot do every thing, you can do a great deal. You can, at least, *try* to do. You have found yourself able to accomplish much, with your associates in the family. You have had influence with some of those who are beyond the family; and what you have done, other young women may do, and you yourself may repeat, and increase.

If you inquire for particulars, my reply is, that were I to commence the subject in detail, I should be obliged to fill a dozen sheets instead of one; and this I cannot possibly do. A few brief hints must suffice.

You have heard of the Roman Emperor, who, from the habit of sporting with the lives of flies, went on till he took a similar delight in sporting with the lives of men. But are there no fly-killers within the circle which Providence has assigned you?

Or if no fly-killers—have you no bird or fish or snake-killers? Of course, I do not mean to place all who kill in the same category; for to one of these species of murders there seems a universal license given—I mean, now, snake-killing. But do not most of the young kill snakes, even, in the spirit of war and murder? Does one in ten ever kill them as a matter of supposed duty? Does one in ten, when they kill them, do it in the Christian spirit and in mercy's own name?

And whatever may be the apology, are not most of the animals around us, whether slain in one way or another—for food or for defence—are they not slain for sport? Where is the boy or young man to be found who hunts, entraps, fishes, &c., for any better reason—were the matter closely examined—than because it is an amusement to him? Where is there one who is not by these sports developing and cultivating the spirit of cruelty?

But need I tell a young woman of your

sense and experience, that all this is war and murder in the bud? Need I say that without this and other small beginnings which I could name, neither war nor murder—in a few generations more—could be entailed upon the world?

You belong, it may be, to a Peace Society; or if you do not, I know well your humano feelings would prompt you to it, if you had opportunity. In any event you abhor war, and regard it as decidedly and deeply unchristian as I do myself.

But what could you do as the member of a Peace Society—nay, what can all the peace societies in the world do—in the way of inducing a warring world to beat its swords into ploughshares, and its spears into pruning-hooks, so long as the young are early initiated—or at least connived at—in their bloody practices? What could a congress of nations do, even?

Have you ever smiled on these juvenile murderers? Have you ever ate the fruit of their doings? Have you ever suffered such things to pass current, in your missionary circle, unrebuted? If you have, be entreated to do it no longer. Paul would not. John would not. Jesus Christ would not. But a word to the wise must be sufficient.

LETTER XXIX.

LABOURS AMONG THE SICK.

You know my views already about the general duty of woman in relation to the sick—that it consists in acting the part of the nurse, without intermeddling with the duties of the physician.

Were life long enough for every one to learn every thing, I^o should certainly rejoice to have woman understand well the human constitution, and the nature and power of medicine. I should rejoice to see her, in this respect, a ministering angel in her own neighbourhood, at least in her own family.

But it is not so. If a few can study the alphabet of those great sciences I have just mentioned, enough at least to enable them to feel their own ignorance, it is a few only. The mass of both sexes have something else to do. There are few Miss Blackwells, and it will be so for years to come.

Nursing, with the sick, I grant to be full half of what is to be done; and sometimes more

than half. A good nurse, without a physician and without medicines, will often do very well alone ; but the best physician in the world, and the best medicines, are worth nothing at all without good nursing—nay, they are worse than nothing.

Now, that woman is pre-eminently qualified for the work of attendance on the sick, and for watching over them by night and by day, I suppose none will deny. And hence it is that in a world where sickness, or at least ill health in some form or other, has become almost the general rule and firm health the exception—or nearly so, woman's aid is most imperiously demanded, and is exceedingly useful. Here, above all yet mentioned, may she act the missionary, and here, too, is missionary labour very much needed.

You have been singularly favored, thus far in life ; too highly favored—if this be not a paradox—for your own good. You hardly know how to take care of the sick when called to them. Besides this, you are timid and fearful. You lose your self-possession, and sometimes become wholly unfit for the discharge of the duties which devolve upon you.

The present sickly season will probably place you in new circumstances. It will be almost

a miracle if you are not called upon in the divine arrangements, to aid in half a dozen or a dozen families. Your greater maturity than that of many young women, will lead them to suppose you are by so much the better qualified for their purpose.

Receive the call with thankfulness, rather than regret, should it be made, and immediately obey it. I have no fear of danger, except from your own neglect. There is seldom any just reason for supposing a disease to be in itself contagious. Besides, if in one case in a hundred or a thousand, such a thing as contagion should exist, to fear it would be the best course to invite it.

You need not, however, in avoiding one extreme, run into another—that of recklessness. You must take care of yourself. Obey all the laws of health as far as you can. Breathe pure air, keep clean, eat and drink with the most perfect regularity, retire early and rise early, and avoid over-anxiety and fretfulness. Do all this, I mean, as far as the nature of the circumstances will permit.

I say as far as you are permitted by circumstances; for it often happens that disease falls upon the poor; and it still oftener happens that they are the persons who most require your

services. Their sick will be in small unventilated rooms; and they will be without a great many other conveniences which the laws of health would indicate. Occasionally, too, you will have to watch over them by night. When you do this last, however, be sure to sleep the next day, more or less. Or otherwise be careful, in deferring it, not to over-sleep when the succeeding night arrives.

One thing you should avoid with double solicitude. Thousands who go among the sick, either by change of habits or by other causes, become somewhat deranged in their digestive systems and resort to medicine. Now, medicine, of all kinds, and at all times, especially active medicine, is quite dangerous enough, except when given by a skilful physician; but it is peculiarly so, when you are among the sick. Avoid it, in these circumstances, as you would poison.

Although you have had little experience in sickness, do not imagine there is any mystery into which you must be initiated, in order to success. The whole consists in *taking good care*. I have spoken of the necessity of obedience to the physical laws on your own part; but it is still more necessary that the sick should obey.

The soft but prompt hand ; the gentle but ready voice ; indulgence when it is admissible, but firmness to refuse where it must be so ; the most rigid obedience to the directions of the medical adviser, and yet a constant adherence to your own good sense in regard to the circumstances ; these are among the most important directions I can possibly give you.

Only one word more, and that seems hardly necessary. It relates to medicine. Many think that when they are through with their duties to a sick friend, they must certainly take a dose of physic to carry off the diseased tendencies which may exist ; or, as is sometimes said, to cleanse the blood. Nothing can be more unsafe. But of all the superstitions which prevail, the notion that the blood can be purified by a dose or two of medicine is most ridiculous, not to say most despicable.

And yet great multitudes of sensible people fall victims to this superstition. A sister of my own, whom I much esteemed and loved, and her husband, were residing in Haddam, in Connecticut about thirty years ago, during the prevalence of typhus fever, and were compelled to be much among it. At length, when the dying were dead and buried, and the living partly recovered, my brother and sister thought it

necessary to "physic off" the system a little, or "cleanse the blood." Accordingly they took physic. In a few weeks they were both joined to the great congregation of the dead.

Avoid then, I say again, this foolish and hurtful error. The best preventative of disease is firm health and good habits. Obey God's laws, and live; disobey them, and you are no longer safe.

LETTER XXX.

SELF-DENIAL.

You will have one objection to bring against the counsels of some of the foregoing chapters, viz., that I mistake entirely your circumstances, and expect you to give up that time which is indispensable to obtaining the means of support.

For how can a young woman, who lives by the labour of her hands, be able, you will say, to be a missionary, in all or even one half of the various ways which have been pointed out?

In general, I reply, by "redeeming the time," as the Scriptures call it; that is, by making the *most* of it. Much of the past has been wasted. What remains—be it less or more—must be spent more profitably. Not only must every moment, in all time to come, be taken care of and turned to good account, but it must be made the most of. You must learn to *deny* yourself and take up the cross.

I do not mean by this, of course, that you must do nothing but labour for the good of

others, in any such sense as will lead you to despise amusement and relaxation, and almost grudge the necessary time for sleep. You know I have insisted on the necessity of amusement to every body, in some of my former letters.

But then I have also insisted—and must here do it again—that you may and should so arrange your business and duties, as to have many of your engagements be neither more or less than amusement to you. In this way alone, you will be able to redeem much time which would otherwise be wasted in amusement for its own sake.

It is quite unfortunate, I repeat, that you entertain such views as you do, about the drudgery and slavery of doing things by system. For myself, I never feel more truly free and independent than when I am carrying out a plan, to which I have practically bound myself.

I do most earnestly entreat you to try, once more, to put yourself upon such a system of living that every hour may have its specified duties from which there can be no discharge. For then alone, as it seems to me, will you truly enjoy your life. This doing every thing at random or hap-hazard, though when done it were done well, is unworthy of a rational being.

Thus you should have your hours of rising and of retiring ; of bathing and dressing ; of reading, and of devotion ; of making calls and of labouring in the garden and elsewhere ; and you should depart from them as seldom as possible.

It is not easy for you to imagine how much you seem to gain—how much more time you seem to have and really will have, when you live by a regular system, than when you live in your present desultory manner. The joys of life will be doubled to you, if not tripled.

But then you must not only have a system—it should be a good one. True, one not quite so excellent is better than none. Still it requires a good degree of knowledge of your own constitution of body and mind, as well as of your capabilities, to adopt a system which is susceptible of no improvement. Indeed you will probably find occasions to vary even a tolerably good system, from time to time, as new light shall beam upon your path.

Suppose, for example, you resolve on retiring at nine and rising at four in summer, and of retiring at eleven and rising at six in the winter. You may find after much experience, reflection, and study, that it were better to retire in winter at ten and rise at five. And surely

you ought to follow out your convictions of truth and duty.

I am not quite certain that you sleep too much, taking the whole time together; and yet that you sometimes do, there can be no doubt. Or at least you lie in bed too long. Burgh says, in his "Dignity of Human Nature" that there is no time more wickedly wasted than that which is spent in dozing—that is, half way between sleeping and waking.

But there is another fact in connection with this which should be remembered. By negligence and delay in regard to rising when the seven hours are just expired, one who might otherwise sleep enough in seven hours may spread out her sleep, as it were, to eight hours, or even more. In other words, the sleep which is longer continued, will be less sound in the same proportion. Much precious time has been wasted in this way.

By a little care in this particular, and by being as regular in your hours as possible, I think you may save an hour in twenty-four, throughout the year. For I am quite confident you spend at least eight hours in and about the bed, every day, taking the whole year together; which, for a person of your age, and of your temperament and habits, if not for almost

any person over thirty years of age, is at least an hour more than is necessary.

Again, you may save time in dressing. Young women waste a great deal of time at the toilet and glass. How much is indispensably necessary, I will not undertake to determine. But if every one will wash her whole person daily in water, and put on a simple, clean apparel, without any plaits, ruffles, flounces, curls, &c. I am sure it need not take a very large share of female time to dress properly.

Neatness and cleanliness of person and dress are indispensable ; but she who feels a greater pleasure in doing good, than in looking pretty, will be very cautious about all that is beyond this. And she who is duly cautious will find herself able to redeem a great deal more time in twenty-four hours than she is aware.

But there is another way in which and by which you may save almost half your waking hours. It is by a thorough reform in matters which pertain to eating and drinking. I know well that I shall be met at the threshold of this subject by the reply that woman is obliged, in this respect, to suit the depraved tastes and habits of others ; and that therefore the attempt at reform should begin with others. This ob-

jection is partly true and partly untrue. It is true that woman has to please others, and may not, therefore, be able to accomplish at once, all she might devise in the way of reformation ; and yet, if her heart were fully set on knowing and doing the right, she could accomplish ten times as much as she now supposes. She could, at least, redeem a *part* of her time. And the more she should do, the more she *might* do. Man will not be so capricious and unreasonable in his appetites and habits, when woman ceases to pander to them by unreasonable and wicked cookery.

For, say what you will about the necessities of your condition, woman is as truly enslaved to the din of pots and kettles and tables, as man is to his appetites and passions ; and more than this is even true. Her slavery is a willing one. She is as fond of excitement and of exciting food and drinks, as man.

Now if you view this matter in its proper light, you must act. Instead, for example, of spending, on an average, three or four or five hours a day in preparing the food of the family to which you now belong, or to which you may hereafter be attached, it is highly probable that an average of about one hour will answer every important purpose. I mean every purpose of

enjoyment and health—mere fashion being excluded.

You will still say, you cannot control the arrangements of the family in which you reside at present. No, you cannot entirely; but you can do what you can. And whenever in the good providence of God you come to be placed at the head of another family, your efforts to do what you can, in your present position, will have prepared you to do much more, in a situation where you will have much greater power.

If you have in your mind's eye a correct standard, it will not be difficult to approach that standard continually—to be always making advances. And every minute you gain or enable others to gain is so much saved. Even in the family where you now reside, you can do much by acting in conformity with truthful precept and practice yourself, if others do not. Your example and practice will not—cannot—be lost, even though you remain alone.

The necessaries of life require but little of our time in their preparation. It is luxuries which keeps us all the while chained to the oar. I know, indeed, that it is difficult to make a line of demarkation between luxuries and necessities, especially as the luxuries of to-day become the necessities of to-morrow;

the luxuries of to-morrow the necessaries of the day after ; and so on. Still we may do something towards it.

Thus bread, which is the staff of life, costs but little time. Four hours' labour, by a good housekeeper, will furnish bread enough to last a family of five persons about six days. This is 40 minutes a day. Then allow 40 minutes more for setting the table, cleaning the dishes, &c., and you have an aggregate of one hour a day, to be expended on food and cookery.

You will say, man cannot live on bread, alone. Yes, he can. Nevertheless, I do not think it advisable that he should. It is indeed the staff of life—the *main* thing. But there are many farinaceous articles, almost as good as bread ; and then there is the whole catalogue of fruits besides.

And yet, extend the list of healthy dishes as far as you will, and you will hardly find another whose preparation is more costly than bread. To prepare a fire (though the fire itself is often prepared to our hands) and bake half a peck of potatoes, requires but a few minutes of time. Or rather it requires but a few minutes to place them in the oven and take them out again.

And is not rice as easily cooked,—and beans

and peas, and turnips and beets—as bread is ! And how long does it take to prepare milk for the table ? Most happily the fruits, many of them, are already prepared for us in God's own way. It costs none of our time to prepare them, and only a little to collect them from the trees, shrubs, or vines where they grow.

It is the cakes, pies, sauces, preserves, and mixed dishes, with the seasonings, and condiments that accompany them, and the tea, coffee, chocolate, or shells, that consume about seven-eighth's of woman's time, and leave her so little for missionary purposes.

They do so, in three ways. 1. They rob her of her time, in a direct manner. 2. They enfeeble her vital energies, and those of her friends for whom she cooks, and thus lessen her efficiency for other purposes. 3. They keep her mind in a lower region than they should, and they make the society in which she moves, and must move, at once "earthly, sensual," and in every respect undesirable.

To illustrate my subject, let me state briefly, what I have seen in one instance ; for I have long been a traveller, and have endeavoured to travel with my eyes open.

There is a region of New England, where two days of each week are devoted, almost ex-

clusively, to cookery ; especially during the winter. On Wednesdays, and Saturdays, it would seem as if the great end and aim of housekeepers were to exceed any thing ever before known, either by themselves or others, in the richness and abundance of their dishes.

On Saturday, more particularly, instead of making preparation for the Sabbath, housekeepers pursue a course, the results of which are as likely to unfit both themselves and their families for the duties and privileges of this day, as if this were the great object for which they labour. They come to the Sabbath, care-worn, and almost without any strength of muscle, or energy of mind ; and are just fitted to deal out to their friends, in the form of dinners or otherwise, what will, almost inevitably, render them as stupid as themselves.

Now this energy of body and mind is not expended in preparing plain food ; for this, as I have said already, costs but little labour.—They spend themselves literally, “for that which is not bread,” and which doth not profit. They wear themselves out in making pies, cakes, tarts, rich sauces, gravies, &c.

Nor is this wicked waste of time and strength—aye, and money too—confined to two days of the week, and to a few families.

or even to the particular portion of country to which I have referred. It has become, to a great extent, the order of the day both there and elsewhere. Woman is become, in this respect, the veriest slave to arbitrary and unreasonable custom you can imagine.

I am not quite certain that it is necessary to put you on your guard against the danger of sliding into this dreadful current. And yet I have my fears for you. Besides, if you were in no danger of going any farther than you have already gone, are you quite sure you have not already gone too far?

You will smile at this inquiry, I dare say; but smile on, if you choose. It may be my turn to smile by and by; unless, indeed, the subject should prove so serious as to excite tears rather than smiles.

Do you not spend several hours of each week in the work of preparing dishes, for yourself or the family in which you reside, which, though harmless compared with many others that I might mention, do yet take up a vast amount of valuable time? Suppose this time to be but six hours; are not six hours a matter of consequence?

Let us consider this matter. You spend this portion of time weekly, in making, not in-

deed the richest preparations, but such as you will acknowledge to be far less wholesome than good plain bread, or bread and milk; or rice, plain puddings, plain fruit or vegetables.

Do you say your time is your own, and you have a right thus to spend it? I grant, the claim in part; but a part only. Your time is your own; at least, it is loaned to you that you may be a free agent in the manner of expending ~~it~~. Still, you are responsible for its use. You are bound to spend it in such a way as will be likely to do the most good.

And can you seriously believe there is ~~no~~ way in which you could expend so profitably your six hours of each week, as in making cakes and pies, even plain ones? Might you not, after preparing that food only which is plain and simple, just spend the residue in something else?

Suppose a sick neighbour requires your aid. You have an abundance of plain food in the house, either already cooked, or susceptible of being prepared for the table in a very short time. Nay, admit that you have plenty of good bread, milk, and fruits. On these you could live well enough for a week if necessary; only your perverted appetite is ever and anon calling for rich dishes, and you love to gratify it

But now that your neighbour is sick, and needs your aid, as an attendant or nurse, and the question comes fairly before your mind, which you ought to do—content yourself with the plain food you already have, and thus be able to do good by visiting the sick, or yield to a clamorous appetite, and indulge yourself and let the sick go—is there any doubt which you will do?

Some would say, It is not so much for myself that I would go and prepare other dishes, as to have something to set before friends, should they call. I could confine myself to the plainest viands a long time, for the sake of helping the sick, or performing many other kind offices in society; but to set these plain things before my friends, would be a greater self-denial than I should be ready to make.

But would you say this? I know better. You would deny yourself at once. Suppose, however, the needy sick individual is a mile distant—would you do it in that case? Suppose the distance to be two miles—three miles—five miles—how then? Or suppose it to be so great that you cannot go yourself at all, but can only arouse somebody else by your prayers or letters, or other efforts, to do something, either personally or by proxy, which shall afford relief as the result—would you then do it?

If you doubt or hesitate, why should you ? Does distance, when the want is well known, lessen at all your obligation ? What though the suffering was in Ireland, or even on the opposite side of the globe—is it the less real ? Is not the sufferer your brother still, or your sister ? And will you hesitate, for a moment, about the little self-denial—or if you please so to call it, self-sacrifice, which is required ?—Will you, as a Christian, dare to do it ?

Or, once more ; suppose this individual is soul-sick, rather than afflicted with bodily disease. Suppose him, I mean, ignorant or vicious. He is without the light of the Gospel, it may be ; or if not, he has not yet made it of any practical value, by receiving it with joy and gratitude, and endeavouring to comply with its blessed requirements. In short, he is yet the slave of sin—without hope, and without God in the world. In this case what will you do ?

You see I have not brought to you an imaginary case. For if there are no sick immediately around you, they are to be found somewhere. And if there were no persons on the great globe who needed your aid, for the purpose of *restoring* either body or mind, is not the great field of prevention wide open to you ? And is not prevention far better than cure ?

Now it does seem to me, either that woman is thoughtless in this matter, or else voluntarily and greatly wicked. For charity's sake I will believe she is thoughtless. Such a view as I have taken, of her obligations, and the duty of a little self-denial, has probably not been presented distinctly to her mind. I do not say that she would come up to her duty, in every instance, if it were so ; but I think she would be more likely to act in light than in the darkness of ignorance.

However, it is not in the matter of self-indulgence at the table alone that she is loudly called, as a missionary, to self-denial and self-sacrifice ; it is in regard to sleep, dress, and many other things. And if you do not need these hints, do not some of your neighbours ? Do not your sex generally ? How can woman co-operate with Christ to the full extent of her power and capacity, till she knows of what she is capable, and what is her duty ? How can she be a Christian missionary till she knows what a Christian missionary is ?

I wish you would properly consider this whole matter. For, until woman can be brought to consideration, her name will not be redeemed ! nor will she act as an efficient missionary. She must be dead and buried—prac-

tically so, I mean—for about three-fourths of her working hours.

When I say I wish you would consider the matter, I mean your sex, of which you are a representative. I grant indeed, that you do not sink yourself and others, quite as low as many do, because your lot is more favourably cast than that of many young women.

And yet, remember that to whom much is given, of the same shall much be required. If you have half your time redeemed already, so far as food and cooking are concerned, remember that this but increases your responsibility to use that time in such a way as will tend to emancipate others from the error, from which God in his providence has already exempted you.

It is quite within the bounds of truth to say that, all things ~~and~~ considered, woman's time might half of it be saved by a proper and reasonable change in the habits of society, and every body be made the better and the happier for it.

Do you say that this takes for granted that woman, when relieved from slavery to sensual customs, will immediately betake herself to her appropriate sphere, whereas facts prove the reverse? The truth is, I am not saying what

she *will* do, so much as what she might do, and what she ought to do.

For I am not by any means ignorant that where, by virtue of custom and affluence, or at least the former, woman has a full supply of what is called help in her domestic department, it here and there happens that this help is help indeed, and she is relieved from her cares to an extent that would enable her to act out the missionary, according to the general tenor of the doctrines of my letters—and yet with this increased capability of doing more of angels' work than before, she commonly does less.

Not but that she makes and keeps the acquaintance of a few friends and neighbours, and makes a sufficient number of "morning calls." But this acquaintance and those calls accomplish almost any thing else rather than the purposes whereto they were sent and designed. Instead of elevating mankind, as they might, very much indeed, they probably have the contrary effect, and tend to debase them.

One of the greatest difficulties I shall have to meet in endeavouring to make you an efficient missionary is your love of home, and of quiet, and your general desire to please. You wish to be in the shade—to see and not be seen so

much. You wish to do your own business, and not seem to meddle with that of others.

Especially will it be to you a work of self-denial, to stand out of the ranks of housekeeping on the old plan, and for the sake even of doing good—of pulling people out of the fire—to become a by-word and a proverb, if not a hissing, to the community around you.

I admit that it is no trifle for woman to take the ground indicated in this letter ; and yet take it she must before she can be emancipated—I mean, before she can be emancipated as a sex.

She must not longer tolerate customs which keep her in bondage all her days, not only to those very customs, but which encourage and perpetuate ignorance and crime, by feeding the fires of impurity and intemperance. She must come up to the work of self-denial almost as much for her own sake as for the sake of others.

I have dwelt to an unusual length on this great subject, and yet seem hardly to have begun my remarks. May I hope that you will give it due consideration ? May I hope—may I *not* hope rather—to see you a burning and shining light in the journey of life, and that your path and that of those around you, will be made brighter and brighter by your efforts, till you reach the portals of eternal day ?

LETTER XXXI.

SELF-SACRIFICE.

IN concluding this long series of letters, allow me first to recapitulate a little; and then to present a few additional reasons why you should endeavour to act up to the spirit of what I have from time to time suggested.

" I have endeavoured to show you that God, in his providence, and in the work of redemption, has constituted every human being—especially every young woman—a missionary. I have endeavoured to point out, briefly, what it is to be a missionary, at home and abroad, in school and in church, by pen and by tongue, by precept and by example. I have told you of some things that may be done single-handed, and of some that can better be done by associated effort—what must be done alone, and what demands the aid of friendship, especially conjugal friendship. Finally, though rather incidentally—as I did not at first intend it—I

have spoken of qualifications for friendship, especially conjugal friendship.

In pursuance of my plan, I have spoken of the love we ought to have for our fellow-beings, and have dwelt, at some length, on the duty of denying ourselves—perhaps, even, of laying down life for them—should the case require it. On this topic—the duty of self-sacrifice—I crave your patience a little further.

The world never has been advanced one inch, and—such are the Divine arrangements—never can be, without not only much self-denial, but also much self-sacrifice. In truth, this seems to me the very corner stone and pillar of Christianity. I beseech you, says Paul, that you present yourselves “a living sacrifice.”

We must not only be willing to live on the simplest fare, and be clad in the coarsest apparel, and sleep on the plainest bed, in order to save time and means for carrying out our missionary plans and purposes, but we must be willing to sacrifice our own just rights, lose our health, and die prematurely, if in no other way our object can be accomplished.

Has woman—even redeemed woman—this willingness to *do*, and *be*, and *suffer*, almost any thing which can be laid upon her, for

Christ's sake? Is she willing to give up the idea of pleasing others—by following the fashions which custom has imposed in regard to dress, furniture, equipage, food, cookery, &c.,—and serve, and please, with supremest diligence, the Lord Christ? Is she ready and willing to come up to the spirit of the great truth,—“It is more blessed to give than to receive?”

Or is she of those who, as Paul says, “seek their own, not another's good?” Is she not—Mr. Flint and Mungo Park to the contrary notwithstanding—supremely selfish, not to say sensual? Does she not “desire to have,” as James expresses it,—not indeed houses, and lands and stocks, but those things which tend to make female life what she would deem comfortable—with an intensity which is hardly exceeded by our own sex?

I leave the decision of these questions, my dear sister, to you and others. Understand me, however. I am not blowing hot and cold, as the saying is, in the same breath. I am not making woman now almost an angel, and now as selfish and low as the rest of the world. If she is thus a paradox, I did not make her so. It is because she is made *to be* angelic, and *may* and *ought* to become so, that I regret

to find any relics of a fallen nature about her, especially one so odious as selfishness. I would have her be a woman, and strive to be a god, as the poet Young would say. I would have her, finally and in one word, act up to the dignity of her nature and fulfil her mission.

Be it yours to set an example to your own and unborn generations, of woman as she should be. Redeem your time. Waste it not, as woman does continually, on the things of time and sense, that perish in the using, and leave others to perish ; but use it to the glory of God our Saviour and the good of mankind. So shall you save a soul from death, and be a means of saving others. So shall your path be that of the just, which shines brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

FINIS.

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